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Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

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CUC finally hires new executive director

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Theisen gets $200K per annum, with allowances for one-year housing, vehicle, relocation costs, other standard benefits

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors approved Friday the hiring of professional engineer Christopher Theisen as CUC's executive director, just a couple of days past one year when the position became vacant.

See CUC on Page 4

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Human Resources manager Francisco Matsunaga discusses his office's recommendation to approve the hiring of Christopher Theisen as CUC's new executive director during the CUC board's special meeting on Friday.

CNMI sees 1st gas price rollback of the year

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Local oil companies reduced their prices last week, marking the first price reduction of 2024.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After three consecutive increases, the CNMI saw its first rollback in gas prices after local oil companies reduced

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CPA incurred over $160K deficit

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has reportedly already incurred a deficit of over $160,000.

See DEFICIT on Page 4

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

The Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors held a regular board meeting last week.

Yumul

Yumul to subpoena Naked Fish, Hafa Adai Roasting

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives special committee that is investigating the previous administration's Building Optimism, Opportunity, and Stability Together grant program has decided to issue subpoenas to the owners of Naked Fish Bar and Grill and Hafa Adai Roasting Company.

During the House Special Committee on Federal Assistance & Disaster-related Funding's meeting on Friday, Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan) moved to authorize committee chair Rep. Ralph N. Yu-

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Local

CHRYSTAL MARINO
Over a hundred participants, residents, and overseas delegates pose for a photo during the 2024 Pacific Risk Management Ohana conference, also known as PRiMO, at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan last Thursday.

PRiMO conference explores how to build a resilient future

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Well over a hundred participants, resident, and overseas delegates alike packed the 2024 Pacific Risk Management Ohana conference, also known as PRiMO, at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan last Thursday to discuss, learn, and share ideas on how they can build a better and resilient future for the islands.

The conference's Day 1 presentations by keynote speakers and the panel discussions explored topics as diverse as building a resilient and sustainable future in the Pacific, multi-hazard disaster planning, incorporating traditional ecological knowledge into planning and management, and coral reefs as natural infrastructure. Throughout the day, many questions and ideas were shared among those present.

In one of the panels, guest speakers Dr. Austin J. Shelton, director of the University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant; Global Energy and Water Communities of Practice coordinator Erin M. Derrington under the Local 2030 Islands Network, and Northern Marianas College president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero talked about the importance of creating a sustainable future in the Pacific.

Richard Salas of the Department of Coastal Resources Management, one of the organizing entities, shared in his remarks that this is the first PRiMO Conference to be held in the CNMI.

In line with the conference theme of "Resilience in Action," Salas said it is their hope to learn about stories of adaptation, innovation, and determination. "As we have come to learn, we as Pacific Islanders and residents alike are resilient to the many obstacles that we have encountered," he said.

In the next two days, Salas hopes to have productive conversations centered on disaster recovery, disaster preparedness, the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge into management, and sustainable development practices.

"We also hope that this event serves as a catalyst for the creation of long-lasting partnerships," he added.

Salas said the conference is an opportunity to showcase the work of local practitioners in both the government and non-government sectors, as well as celebrate the power of collaboration to address unpredictable challenges and foster progress.

Besides DCRM, the event's organizers include the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office for Coastal Management.

Jean Tanimoto from PRiMO and the NOAA Office for Coastal Management, said she is personally excited to see the CNMI's response to the conference, being one who has advocated to bring the conference to the U.S. territories.

"We've had meetings in Honolulu, and we realized we have to go out to the territories, we have to go out to the neighbor islands in order to allow more conversations and more people to come to the table to have these conversations, because not everyone can get to Honolulu all the time," Tanimoto said. "And so we're glad to be here to hear from people in their places about what their issues are so that we can really band together in order to come up with specific…solutions."

She acknowledged that the demand for these kinds of conversations is high, "so we're just so excited about it. It makes us think we need to come back more often," she said.

Tanimoto said an estimated 15% to 20% of the participants that day had traveled to Saipan, either from Guam or from other places in the Pacific.

"We have some folks who came from the mainland. We have a guy who came from the U.S. Virgin Islands. …We have someone from American Samoa. … We opened it up to whoever wants to come, and people who want to come and learn about what's going on here, you know, to bring it back to their places," she added.

Tanimoto said that Pacific voices working together to inform higher-ups is necessary.

"Coming from a federal agency, it's so important for us to actually hear from the people we serve. …We don't want to make up our own ideas of what people need. We want to hear from them. …With PRIMO, we're the vessel, we just set it up and we hope that people come to share ideas. Like in the Pacific, we need to really work together. We have these common histories together. And so being able to not reinvent the wheel, to leverage what each other is doing, to learn from each other, I think we only get stronger," she said.

The PRiMO conference's final session was last Friday, during which they discussed planning for coastal hazards with U.S. Geological Survey products and tools, the next step to take for sea level rise and inundation, and identifying synergies and leveraging resources with partners.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

The CNMI Department of Commerce, Central Statistics Division will start the CNMI 2024 Prevailing Wage Study (PWS) survey beginning on March 01, 2024 and notifies all businesses and employers in the CNMI to log on to the CSD Data Collection Portal and complete the PWS survey questionnaire.

All businesses and employers (Private & Public), with and with no employees, are urged to complete this survey before March 15, 2024.

Data Collection Portal Link: http://cnmidata.commerce.gov.mp/dev1/

SHRM meeting highlights WIAO role in workforce dev't

By DAPHNE CRUZAT
d.cruzat03@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The general membership meeting of the CNMI Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management last Thursday shone a spotlight on the Workforce Investment Agency Office and the role it plays in the growth of the CNMI workforce.

The meeting, held at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, was headlined by guest speaker Joe Villacrusis, WIAO program manager, who gave a comprehensive overview of the Apprenticeship Program, shedding light on its key features, success stories, and how it contributes to the CNMI workforce.

The Workforce Investment Agency provides a variety of programs that assist individuals residing in the CNMI with accessing education, training and employment services. The main programs that were mentioned in the meeting include the Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Registered Apprenticeship Program.

The Pre-Apprenticeship program is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship Program.

"The program provides paid training, educational and career counseling, hands-on learning activities, industry-recognized credentials and a partnership with one or more Registered Apprenticeship Programs," said Villacrusis.

The Registered Apprenticeship Program is an employer-driven model that combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction. The target populations are

See SHRM on Page 4

House bill will require disclosing 'salvage vehicle' info

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives unanimously passed last Feb. 16 a bill that will require that vehicles that are rebuilt from salvage or have undergone much damage but are rebuilt and resold must disclose that information upon transfer of ownership.

The legislation, House Bill 23-71, House Draft 1, defines "vehicle rebuilt from salvage" as a flood-damaged vehicle, a vehicle branded as a salvage vehicle by another state or territory, or a vehicle that has been damaged to the extent that the vehicle is determined to be a total loss.

With all 20 House members voting "yes," House Bill 23-71, House Draft 1 now goes to the Senate for action.

Before voting, the House adopted the House Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee report that recommended passage of the bill with amendments.

The bill proposes to amend the Commonwealth Code by adding new provisions requiring disclosure upon transfer of ownership of a salvage vehicle.

Rep. Angelo A. Camacho (Ind-Saipan) introduced the bill last September and was referred to the JGO Committee.

Camacho stated in the legislation that there are businesses within the CNMI that engage in the selling and/or reselling of previously damaged vehicles, commonly known as "salvage vehicles." Despite being aware of the damage history of such vehicles, these businesses refuse to disclose such information and continue to give false impression to potential buyers that the vehicles are in pristine and flawless conditions, he said.

To address that unethical business practice, Camacho said it is of utmost importance to implement disclosure requirements that detail the damage sustained by such vehicles.

Under the legislation, any person who buys a vehicle rebuilt from salvage who was not provided a copy of a disclosure affidavit and who, after the sale, discovers that the vehicle had been rebuilt from salvage shall be entitled to a full and immediate refund of the purchase price from the prior owner.

Any owner, seller, or transferor of a vehicle rebuilt from salvage who fails to comply with the rule shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine of $1,999 for each subsequent offense.

According to the JGO Committee report, some individuals in the CNMI have been selling and/or reselling used damage vehicles without disclosing the vehicles' damage history.

The committee finds that, despite being aware of such history, these individuals continue to sell vehicles without disclosing such vital information.

Without disclosure, the committee says, potential buyers may be misled that such vehicles are in excellent condition.

The committee determines that there are no laws that require full disclosure of a vehicle's damage history upon sale and/or transfer of ownership.

The committee deems it highly appropriate to establish vehicle damage disclosure requirements upon the sale and/or transfer of ownership of a "salvage vehicle."

The committee notes that other U.S. jurisdictions such as Virginia, Arizona, and others have established similar laws and/or regulations that require disclosure of a vehicle's salvage history prior to sale or other transfer of ownership.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

The Department of Public Lands will be conducting a Public Hearing for Suwaso Corporation dba Coral Ocean Resort's proposed lease of public lands in Unai Dangkulu, Saipan. The public hearings will be held as follows:

- **Monday, March 4, 2024 at 5:30pm for Saipan at the Department of Public Lands (Conference Room)**
- **Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 5:30pm for Tinian at the Tinian Court House**
- **Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 5:30pm for Rota at the Rota Court House**

MEETING AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Introduction of Proposed Lease
III. Introduction of Suwaso Corporation
IV. Public comment, questions and concerns
V. Closing
VI. Adjourn

For more information, please contact the Real Estate Division at telephone no. 670-234-3751 thru 3753.

Issued this 20th day of February, 2024.

/s/ Teresita A. Santos, Secretary, DPL

CEDA
COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-6245/6293/7145/7146 • Fax: (670) 235-7147 • www.developcnmi.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Monday, February 26, 2024

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) THRU ITS CHAIRMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CEDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A REGULAR MEETING ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024 AT 9:00 A.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CEDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CEDA BUILDING, OLEAI SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
  A. Call to Order
  B. Roll Call
  C. Adoption of Agenda
  D. Adoption of Minutes
    1. December 19, 2023 – Regular Meeting
    2. January 11, 2024 – Special Meeting
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. REPORTS
  A. Executive Director's Report
    1. Administrative & Personnel – Board Action
      a. Performance Evaluation Tool
      b. Executive Director's Contract
  B. Financial Matters – Board Action
    1. CEDA Financial Status
    2. Adoption of CEDA FY '24 & FY '25 Budgets
  C. Loan & Legal Matters – Board Action
    1. Tito Sablan and the Estate of Elphidia C. Sablan
    2. Tomas & Cecilia M. Calvo
  D. Qualifying Certificate/Economic Development Activities
    1. Programs' Update
IV. OLD BUSINESS – Board action
  A. FLIB - New Loan Program
V. NEW BUSINESS – Board Action
  A. Adoption of CEDA Board Resolution 001-2024 – Designation of Signatories on CEDA Bank Accounts
  B. Adoption of CEDA Board Resolution 002-2024 – Authorizing the Issuance of Pension Obligation Bonds
  C. House Bill 23-52 – "Loan Write-Off Act of 2023"
  D. Program Managers' Participation in Executive Sessions
  E. Proposed Amendments to the CEDA Statute
    1. Provision for Consumer Loans
    2. Provision for a Sunset Clause for Consumer Loans & Refinancing of CEDA Loans
    3. Amendment to the CEDA Act to Increase the Executive Director's Lending Limit
VI. OTHER MATTERS
VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.

/s/ **FRANCISCO M. RABAULIMAN**
Chairman, CEDA Board of Directors

IPI sues CCC, Palacios anew

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Casino operator Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has filed anew its lawsuit against the Commonwealth Casino Commission, its officials, and Gov. Arnold I. Palacios.

IPI refiled last Friday its two lawsuits against Palacios, the CCC, and its officials regarding the regulatory fee statute under the Casino License Agreement that IPI claims are "excessive and unlawful fees."

The lawsuits are the same ones IPI had asked to be dismissed last Jan. 30.

The plaintiff did not mention why they initially decided to drop their case, but a *Saipan Tribune* article about a previous Commonwealth Casino Commission meeting quoted CCC executive director Andrew Yeom as saying that IPI had agreed to drop its lawsuits as they are in the middle of settlement talks. The recently refiled lawsuits did not mention why the two cases have been brought to court again.

The refiled lawsuit is suing Palacios, CCC chair Edward C. Deleon Guerrero, vice chair Rafael S. Demapan, CCC commissioners Mariano Taitano, Martin Mendiola, and Ramon M. Dela Cruz, and CCC executive director Andrew Yeom in their official and personal capacities.

In it, IPI alleges that CCC and the CNMI administration deprived the casino investor of its constitutional rights by requiring it to pay "excessive and unlawful fees."

IPI claimed in its complaint that, acting under the color of Commonwealth law, the defendants caused it to suffer a substantial deprivation of its contract rights, in violation of U.S. and Commonwealth constitutions.

"The regulatory fee statute imposed additional fees for doing business in the CNMI, which constitutes a substantial and unconstitutional impairment of the Casino License Agreement. IPI was and is still required to pay the $3-million annual regulatory fee as a prerequisite to exercising its existing contractual and property rights set forth explicitly in the CLA, rights for which it already has compensated [the] CNMI. In essence, defendants are double-charging IPI. The annual regulatory fees are substantial, and the impairment to the express and implied terms of the CLA is direct. The latter imposed regulatory fees, Commission Order 2021-002, and the most recent demand for immediate payment by defendants effectively nullify the explicit terms of the CLA and impose completely unexpected and new liabilities and limitations on the operation of IPI. IPI has incurred and will continue to incur attorney's fees and costs because of these proceedings, in amounts that cannot yet be ascertained," IPI argued.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

OPD getting $161K for Solid Waste Operator Training on Tinian, Rota

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Office of Planning and Development is receiving $161,000 in Solid Waste Management Grants Program funds as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda to bring state-of-the-art infrastructure and economic growth to rural communities.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) disclosed in his *e-kilili* newsletter over the weekend that, as announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture last Wednesday, the grant funds will be used to help develop and teach Integrated Solid Waste Operator Training to solid waste operators on Tinian and Rota.

Sablan said the training will provide operators in an integrated solid waste management environment the expertise to comply with regulations and properly manage various waste streams.

The training will be directed at operators in landfills, transfer stations, green waste processing sites, appliance recycling sites, and E-waste recycling sites.

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said they are funding 216 projects in 45 states, Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

According to Chris Kanazawa, USDA Rural Development state director for Hawaii and the Western Pacific, the funding under the Biden-Harris Investing in America agenda invests in rural communities to build a clean-energy economy that will combat climate change and make the communities more resilient.

CUC

From page 1

Theisen, who is from California and has over 24 years of senior management experience in a similar wastewater, drinking water, and/or power utility, will be paid a salary of $200,000 per annum, with allowances for one year housing, vehicle, relocation costs and standard benefits.

All six board members present in Friday's board meeting voted "yes" to approve a two-year contract for Theisen.

The position has been vacant since Gary P. Camacho resigned on Feb. 21, 2023. CUC administration chief Betty G. Terlaje has been acting executive director since April 2023.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently demanded that CUC pay a $162,000 penalty for failing to timely fill the executive director position and other critical vacant positions at CUC.

During the CUC board meeting on Friday, it was board member Allen Michael Perez who moved to offer the position of executive director to Theisen, given that the CUC management and Theisen have reached acceptable terms for his employment.

Before the voting, CUC Human Resources manager Francisco Matsunaga told the board that Theisen was interviewed on Jan. 27, 2024, by three members of the board and that they have recommended his selection and it's now up for the full board's decision to fully process that selection.

He presented the selection memo for the board's final approval and signature to offer the position to Theisen with the recommended compensation and benefits.

The board then decided to hold an executive meeting to discuss details of the selection and the contract at the advice of the board's counsel, assistant attorney general Hunter Hunt.

According to Matsunaga's report, Theisen met the minimum requirements: He has a master's degree in Business Administration and is a registered and licensed professional engineer in the state of California.

During the interview, Matsunaga said, Theisen shared his understanding of both sides of utilities: power and water/wastewater.

Matsunaga said Theisen had shared he is not fully aware of the details of CUC's current stipulated federal court orders, but that he has operated under a stipulated order and that a regulatory environment is normal to him.

He said Theisen has extensive experience working with contracts, request for proposals, and short-term/long-term goal setting.

Additionally, Theisen engaged with the interview panel in a professional and enthusiastic manner, highlighting his passion for the role of an executive director, Matsunaga said.

Overall, he said, Theisen's performance in the interview was impressive, leaving a positive and lasting impression on the interview panel.

During the open session after the executive session, Hunt said the board had discussed the qualifications of a candidate, as well as certain details about hiring positions outlined in the stipulated orders.

After the voting, board chair Janice A. Tenorio said they will welcome Theisen to Saipan between 60 to 90 days from that day, Friday.

"Congratulations, Mr. Theisen. Great job, team. Thank you so much. We have completed one portion of the SO [stipulated order]," she said.

Tenorio expressed appreciation to Terlaje, who's been holding the position as acting executive director from April 2023 and will occupy the post until Theisen arrives on island.

Tenorio said the entire board as well as the employees appreciate Terlaje for helping the corporation and to continue the efforts to comply with the stipulated order from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

DEFICIT

From page 1

It was learned from CPA board chair Joe Ayuyu during a CPA board meeting last week that, as of last Thursday, the organization has incurred a deficit of over $160,000 on the airport side.

"As of December 2023, we as an organization incurred the loss of approximately $166,000 in terms of our airports. The operating revenues is about $3.1 million, and the operating expenses are about $3.2 million. That's where the difference is. But don't be alarmed, we are working on trying to reverse that," he said.

Ayuyu said the deficit was mainly incurred at the Rota International Airport, which he claims is in bad shape.

"I was just looking at the different areas—Rota, Tinian, and Saipan—and where the losses are coming from. In the case of Saipan, we were able to make over $500,000 income. In the case of Rota, we lost about $163,000. On Tinian, we made money, about $3,000. We will continue to monitor the losses. This is through no fault of Rota because they were in pretty bad shape. So, we're all here to help each other out," he said.

Ayuyu said he is determined to find ways to remedy the situation.

"We need to tighten our belts. We need to do everything we can to not spend money that is unnecessary while still maintaining operations at our Rota airport. We need to strike a balance between what we need to do and what we can spend. Overall, everything looks okay. The deficit is not something to be really concerned about," he said.

One of the ways Ayuyu is looking at to remedy the situation is by collecting money from CPA's vendors and partners.

"Another thing that really caught my eye when I was looking through our financials is how much money is owed CPA. I will be working with our attorney to target the largest debt so we can make a difference in terms of collecting money. If we can collect money from [those] who owes us the most, that would really help us improve our cash flow. So, there's a lot of work. Some of this debt goes back years. I don't know if it's because in the past, CPA didn't have the guts to collect it, but I'm going to do something about this because it's not right. These individuals received service and they're not paying. You can't do that," he said.

In addition, CPA will now be implementing a service charge for vendors on invoices that have not been paid within a certain amount of time.

CPA's Seaports side, on the other hand, is doing very well, Ayuyu said.

"Revenues at the Saipan Seaport was about $1.9 million. Rota lost about $12,000 while Tinian made about $36,000. The problem currently lies with our airports. That's where my attention will be focused on," he said.

GAS

From page 1

prices by 10 cents last week.

Last Thursday afternoon, Mobil Oil Marianas reduced its prices by 10 cents marking the first rollback seen since the beginning of 2024. Shell Marianas reduced its prices shortly after, implementing the change over the weekend.

With the recent reduction in prices, Mobil now charges $5.46 per gallon of Extra fuel from $5.56. Mobil's Supreme fuel also went down from $6.01 per gallon to $5.91, while diesel went from $5.93 to $5.83.

The year started off with an upward trend in gas prices.

YUMUL

From page 1

mul (Ind-Saipan) to issue subpoenas to get documents from the owner of Transcends LLC, which does business as Naked Fish Bar and Grill, and Hafa Adai Roasting Co. and its owner, John Lee, to testify at a date and time set by Yumul.

Committee members did not discuss why they need to issue subpoenas to the two entities. Yumul, however, told *Saipan Tribune* last night that the two companies hosted a BOOST event.

All six committee members present at the meeting voted "yes" to issue the subpoena. Three members were absent.

Committee members did not talk about why they need to subpoena the two private entities.

The committee hearing will start on March 5, 2024, at 10am with the testimony of Shayne Villanueva of Roil Soil. Villanueva, together with Robert Travilla, and Salina Sapp, are the former contractors hired to promote the BOOST Program. Travilla and Sapp are set to testify for March 2, 8, and possibly 11, 2024, at 10am.

The previous Torres administration used $17 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds for the BOOST program.

SHRM

From page 3

adults, dislocated workers and the youth.

"The core components include learning with mentorships, related trainings, rewards for skills gained, nationally recognized credentials and employer commitment upon completion. WIA funds are used to support classroom instruction and provide supportive services to ensure the success of individuals under the program," said Villacrusis.

Current Registered Apprenticeship Program sponsors include Pacific Biomedical Services, Salt and Barber, Naked Fish, the Community Guidance Center of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., CHCC Pharmacy, 500 Sails, MANGO, and Priority Care. There are a total of 34 approved apprentices and are still on a continuous lookout for more participants.

For more information, individuals can contact WIA at (670) 488-2324/2312 or email cnmiwioa@dol.gov.mp.

Chamber presents 'Know Your Risks' training

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce its 1st Quarter Professional Development Training, focused on knowing and understanding your risks, more than just an insurance discussion. This training session is scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 2024, from 9am to 11:30pm. The event will take place at the Marianas Business Plaza, second floor, Suite 201-A.

Facilitated by Dave Silva, vice president and general manager of Assurance Brokers Inc. dba AB Risk Solutions, the "Know Your Risks" training aims to provide participants with valuable knowledge pertaining to precautionary measures and comprehensive solutions to risks and hazards in the workplace. The agenda includes:

■ Identifying specific risks, perils, and hazards pertinent to a business' industry and operations.

■ Exploring proactive measures and strategies to mitigate identified risks tailored to the unique characteristics of the business environment.

■ Exploring insurance options that align with the company's risk profile, ensuring comprehensive coverage and financial protection in lieu of unforeseen events.

■ Emphasizing the importance of preparedness and developing response plans to minimize the impact of risks on the company's operations.

The training promises a dynamic and informative session, providing attendees with valuable insight and comprehensive solutions pertaining to risks in the workplace.

Admission fees for Chamber members is set at $25 per person and $35 per person for future Chamber members. Admission fee comes with light refreshments and beverages.

For more information or to secure your seat, contact the Chamber at (670) 234-7150 or email contactus@saipanchamber.org.

Don't miss this opportunity to better your team's understanding and sharpen skills surrounding solutions to risks and hazards in the workplace. Register now to reserve your spot!

The Chamber is a non-profit organization in the CNMI with a membership of 140 members and growing. SCC is committed to empowering our enterprise as a resource, advocate, and connector for Saipan's private sector, our vision is to create an island where businesses, family, and the community succeed as one. ***(PR)***

NMCADSV launches Project PROM

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence is excited to announce the launch of Project PROM, an initiative aimed at empowering CNMI high school juniors and seniors to become peer advocates against sexual assault while providing free prom attire to participants.

Project PROM seeks to make a difference in students' prom experiences by collecting new or gently used prom attire, including suits, button-ups, pants, ties, shoes, dresses, heels, jewelry, and unused makeup and hair supplies from the community.

The program comprises two components: a workshop and a prom "store." The workshop focuses on education and empowerment, providing participants with essential knowledge about sexual assault and harassment, including signs, impacts, and effective intervention strategies as peer advocates. It also offers valuable resources for individuals who have experienced or know someone experiencing sexual assault, emphasizing the importance of speaking up against wrongdoing and accessing support services.

As an incentive for attending the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to "shop" (for free!) from our prom "store," which features an array of donated items including dresses, button-ups, dress pants, ties, shoes, heels, jewelry, hair styling tools, and more.

"We are super excited to launch Project PROM, aiming to provide students not only with the attire they need for prom but also with the tools to address and prevent sexual assault as well as empowerment to advocate for themselves and others," said Savannah Lyn Delos Santos at the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence. "Together, we hope to create a safer and more supportive community for our youth."

Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Jr./Sr. High School on Rota is the first confirmed participant for Project PROM this year. Other high schools or students (juniors and seniors) who are interested in joining this program can contact us via email at Info@EndViolenceNMI.org. Additionally, NMCADSV is currently organizing an in-person workshop on Saipan, scheduled for Saturday, April 6, 2024. Stay tuned for announcements on how to register for the workshop.

For more information about Project PROM or to contribute through donations, please feel free to reach out to NMCADSV directly at (670) 234-3878 or via email at Info@EndViolenceNMI.org. Stay in the loop with our latest updates and events by following us on Facebook and Instagram @EndViolenceNMI.

If you or someone you know is experiencing any form of sexual violence, assistance is available. Please call 911 for immediate emergency support or contact the victim hotline at (670) 234-5100. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950|
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-003-24

SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF TYPHOON RESISTANT ACCORDION ALUMINUM SHUTTERS AT THE FRANCISCO M. BORJA TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed proposals, subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals (the "RFP") and other contract provisions, for awarding a contract to supply and install typhoon resistant accordion aluminum shutters at the Francisco M. Borja/Tinian International Airport, Tinian, CNMI. The Scope of Work and other considerations will be available for pick up beginning **February 12, 2024**, upon payment of $100.00 in cash, cashier's check or certified check to the CPA Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport.

Proposals will be received at the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd Floor-Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport no later than **2:00 P.M. CHST, March 15, 2024.** Proposals received after the date/time indicated above will not be opened and will be returned to the Proposer.

Each proposal shall be accompanied by a bid bond, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount no less than **ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount**. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

_____ Date: _____
LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-24-014
PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A NEW 2MW GENSET UNIT FOR ROTA POWER PLANT

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Contractors or Vendors for the purchase and installation of a new genset for the Rota Power Plant located in Songsong, Rota. The purchase of and installation of the new genset with approximately 2MW of total net output will improve CUC current power generation capacity needed to sustain critical electrical services to the community of Rota.

The RFP Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration for one RFP package set. Prospective proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by **March 8, 2024** to be considered.

A Pre-proposal Conference will be held on **February 22, 2024 at 9:00 AM (CHST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies of your submission must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-24-014, Purchase and Installation of a 2MW New Genset Unit for the Rota Power Plant"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 A.M.(ChST) on March 19, 2024.** Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the due date and time.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes which will become the obligation of the proposer awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 27, 2024,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org, with a copy to Alvin King, CUC Rota Resident Manager at alvin.king@cucgov.org, Richard Cano, CUC Power Generation Manager at richard.cano@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Senior Administrative Technician at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-24-015
A-16 SEWER LIFT STATION UPGRADE

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the construction of the A-16 Sewer Lift Station Upgrade project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of the installation of a new polymer pre-cast concrete wet well to replace the existing A-16 wet well; installation of OFCI submersible pumps and accessories; new aboveground valve station and appurtenances with concrete pad; installation of new bar screen to replace existing A-1 bar screen; rehabilitation of existing A-16 bar screen; installation of new gravity sewer mains and manholes; installation of H2S controls; reconnection to existing lift station force main; procurement of a portable pumping system with trailer and concrete pad; installation of temporary bypass pumping operations and dewatering; site improvements with new chain-link fence, two vehicular gates and a pedestrian gate; asphaltic concrete pavement driveways with partial compacted base course area; installation of new and replacement of existing gate valves; demolition of existing minor structures and electrical upgrade. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **Two Hundred Seventy (270) calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **February 27, 2024 at 10:00 AM (CHST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-24-015, A-16 SEWER LIFT STATION UPGRADE"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (CHST) March 14, 2024**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The bid guarantee may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States, Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidder. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 (ChST) on March 1, 2024** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email at manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Ms. Nicolette Villagomez, CUC's Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email at nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org, and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Procurement & Supply, Senior Administrative Technician – via email at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

BETTINA G. TERLAJE
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

MVA: More ship arrivals scheduled

On the heels of two cruise ship arrivals already this year, the Marianas Visitors Authority is preparing for two more port calls in the next two weeks.

Concepcion

The M*SC Artania* is scheduled to stop in the Port of Saipan for the day on Monday, Feb. 26, with 1,039 passengers and 531 crewmembers aboard. The *Asuka II* will make port for the day on March 4, 2024, with 710 passengers and 500 crewmembers aboard.

"We invite the local community and businesses to join us in welcoming the passengers and crew of ships making port calls in the Marianas—these include cruise ships, military ships, research vessels, and others," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "We know the Marianas could be their most meaningful and enjoyable stops, given our natural beauty, rich history, and the friendliness of our community, especially. Let's collectively welcome these guests and have them leave our islands with fond memories of the warm hospitality our people are known for."

A majority of passengers of MSC *Artania* are European, while a majority of passengers of *Asuka II* are Japanese. Businesses—especially those in Garapan—are advised to prepare for an influx of visitors on these days. Approximately 6,000 visitors have arrived on Saipan via cruise ship so far this year.

Businesses interested in becoming a member of the MVA for further promotion may register online at www.mymarianas.com or contact MVA Community Projects specialist Jack Aranda at jaranda@mymarianas.com or (670) 664-3200. ***(PR)***

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! NMC

As part of their longstanding support of higher education in the CNMI, Bridge Capital, LLC. recently donated $2,000 to the Northern Marianas College Foundation. In the photo from left, NMC employee John Mithnoy, NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Bridge Capital representatives Julie Ann M. Duenas and Alex Palacios, and NMC employee Maia Pangelinan. Interested individuals and companies who would like to donate to the College can contact the NMC Foundation at nmc@marianas.edu or call (670) 237-6780.

Ogo wants K9 inspections back on Rota

In response to the increasing occurrence and concerns of drug trafficking, Rep. Julie A. Ogo (Ind-Saipan), on Feb. 15, 2023, met with Customs Division director Jose Mafnas to discuss, among other Customs-related issues, plans for the reinstatement and funding of the K9 operation on Rota.

Ogo considers Rota as the first port of entry from Guam and the K9 inspections are critical to prevent the movement of contraband, especially drugs, further north into the CNMI threatening the safety of the people, especially children.

Ogo

In her post-meeting letter, she thanked Mafnas on behalf of the people of Rota for accommodating the meeting and for his genuine support. She also reiterated their discussion on the reinstatement, training, and maintenance funding for effective Customs operation through well-trained and healthy canine and K9 officer.

She also asked Mafnas to keep her updated on the progress of the implementation. She offered her support as a member of Legislature on matters relating to the Rota Customs Office.

The first step, which is already in progress toward accomplishing the reinstatement, is a trainee—a customs officer is currently on Saipan undergoing a certification process followed by training on March 1, 2023, with the canine ready to be assigned to Rota.

"Public Law 19-86, Section 2, amended 6 CMC § 2304 by adding subsection (d) expanding the Customs-search authority, it is also in line with Public Law 18-33, Section 2 extending inspection jurisdiction to 200 miles of the shoreline of any island of the Commonwealth; therefore, the K9 operation on all three islands is necessary to clamp down on all contrabands, especially drugs," Ogo stated.

She further added that following this implementation, she intends to pursue legislation either to strengthen existing laws or require all boaters to file a voyage plan before departing any island. "Contraband trafficking is not limited to air vessels; it also involves movement of illegal substances using small boats, and the filing of voyage plans will be helpful to the Customs Division as well as Division of Boating Safety in rescue operations by identifying boats and boaters on board." ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950|
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID

PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-007-24

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 15, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

PROVIDE AND INSTALL SIX (6) BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL A/C UNITS FRANCISCO M. BORJA/TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE COMMONWONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) ACCOUNTING OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING FEBRUARY 12, 2024. AN ADMINISTRATIVE PAYMENT OF $100.00 SHALL BE PAID TO CPA BEFORE A BIDDER MAY OBTAIN THE BID PACKAGE. PAYMENTS SHALL BE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "PROVIDE AND INSTALL SIX (6) BRAND NEW COMMERCIAL A/C UNITS (**IFB-007-24**)" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., MARCH 15, 2024. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

LEO B. TUDELA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

SAIPAN DIVING WORLD, INC.
PMB 183 BOX 10003 SAIPAN, MP 96950
(670) 483-9999

The limited liability company under the name of Saipan Diving World, Inc. is filing this Notice of Dissolution effective February 26, 2024.

The Saipan Diving World, Inc. has been in business and has been gratified to contribute to CNMI's development. We are extremely proud of our accomplishments from the past year. Unfortunately, due to the current financial difficulties, the running of Saipan Diving World, Inc. has been difficult, like the rest of the companies in the CNMI. Due to this situation, we regret to shut down our company.

On this date of February 26, 2024, the company is winding up the disclosure of Saipan Diving World, Inc.

/s/ Li Fen Ji
Vice President

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) NMHC IFB 2024-007

(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: March 27, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

Purchase and Installation of Windows and Typhoon Shutters for the NMHC Housing Units in Tinian

Project Package will be available on February 26, 2024, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Field Office in Tinian located at the NMC Campus in Tinian on March 1st, 2024, 10:00 a.m. In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB24-GOV/OGM-42400052

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 27, 2024 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"OFFICE SPACE LEASE FOR THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOUSE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG NO. 12552, ANATAHAN DRIVE, CAPTIOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOSUE BY MARCH 15, 2024, TO MR. EPIPHANIO CABRERA JR. VIA EMAIL AT epi.cabrera@gov.mp

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OGM

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Roy Doria Balangue	] FCD-DI CIVIL
Petitioner,	] ACTION NO. 23-0215
	]
vs.	] **SUMMONS FOR**
	] **PUBLICATION**
Noeme Lucerna Balangue	]
Respondent,	]
	]

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT: NOEME LUCERNA BALANGUE

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the Court, within (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 7623 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending It to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 14th day of February, 2024.

_____/s/_____
Clerk of Court

Dems thrilled to participate in upcoming nat'l convention

The history of the Northern Mariana Islands Democratic Party is rooted in the former Popular Party, which led the movement in the 1960s and 1970s for self-determination and the creation of the Commonwealth in permanent political union with the United States of America.

Today, NMI Democrats are proud to be affiliated with the national Democratic Party. In 2016, NMI Democrats were represented for the first time in history at the Democratic National Convention and participated in the nomination of the first female candidate for president in United States history. In the 2020 Democratic National Convention, NMI Democrats endorsed Joe Biden for president and Kamala Harris for vice president, and joined the national party in adopting a bold and progressive platform that set forth a vision for a stronger, more just, and more equitable America.

According to vice chair Luella Marciano, "It's been a long time coming, and we truly do appreciate the camaraderie of our sisters and brothers in Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, along with the 50 states across the country that have been so welcoming and resourceful."

Next month, CNMI Democrats will gather to cast their ballots for their preferred Democratic presidential candidate and will vote for delegates to represent the party at the Democratic National Convention in August. Chicago will host the Convention from Aug. 19-22, and Democrats from across the United States and around the world will gather to formally select the party's candidates for president and vice president of the United States of America.

Executive director Nola Hix had this to say about the upcoming National Convention: "This is the first time where state delegations will stay in a hotel within the city limits, all in downtown Chicago, so we can all connect and travel quickly from

one hotel to another. This is a huge step, and we applaud the Democratic National Convention Committee for successful logistics coordination and not to mention all the convention hotels are energized and unionized. This is a great way to show support by standing behind hardworking union employees across the country since we are the pro-union party."

"We've been given our hotel arrangements, and we are excited to be sharing space with the great states of Michigan, Iowa, Kansas, and Arizona," said party treasurer Shawna Indalecio, "and we expect the trip to be very productive as Democrats will get down to business. We can expect it to be a lot of fun with the planning committee, and local vendors hosting several events and activities for us to look forward to. I've also thrown my name in the hat to be a delegate, and I hope to be elected during next month's primary."

The delegates are individuals chosen to represent their state or territory at the convention. Democrats in the Northern Marianas will host their Presidential Primary from March 5-12 to elect eight delegates to the 2024 Democratic National Convention. The final day of the NMI primaries on March 12 will be held on Saipan at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe with simultaneous sub-primaries on Tinian and Rota.

Individuals interested in becoming delegates to the 2024 Democratic National Convention pledged to one of the presidential candidates are encouraged to visit www.nmidems.org, download the delegate candidacy form, complete the form, and email it to NMI Democratic Party Chair Jonathan P. Cabrera at cabrerajjp@gmail.com To learn more about the four presidential candidates currently on the NMI primary ballot, visit www.nmidems.org. The deadline to file delegate candidacies is today, Feb. 26, 2024. ***(PR)***

United announces daily nonstop flights between Guam and Tokyo-Haneda

- **New flights create a more direct link between Guam and Tokyo's city center**
- **Service is scheduled to start on May 1 and tickets will go on sale tonight**

UNITED

View of Tokyo skyline with Senso-ji Temple and Tokyo skytree at twilight in Japan.

CHICAGO—United Airlines will launch daily nonstop flights between Guam and Tokyo Haneda International Airport on May 1.

Flights, which are subject to government approval, will operate year-round and create a more direct link between Guam and Japan's capital, given the Haneda airport's proximity to the city center. These new flights build on United's 32 weekly flights between Guam and Tokyo-Narita, and tickets will go on sale tonight.

"As we grow our global network, we're always looking for opportunities to give our customers more choice and strengthen links between countries. This route—connecting Tokyo's most convenient airport with our unique Guam hub—accomplishes just that. I appreciate the support of the Department of Transportation in recognizing the importance of this route to our customers and stakeholders," said Patrick Quayle, United's senior vice president of Global Network Planning and Alliances.

United plans to operate a 737-800 on this route, which has room for 166 customers—including 16 business class seats. The flight is scheduled to depart Guam at 19:00 local time and arrive at Haneda at 22:00 on the same day. On the return, the flight will depart Haneda at 23:55 and arrive in Guam at 04:45 the next day.

United is the largest airline in Guam, offering more than 87 weekly flights to 14 destinations. United has operated in Guam for more than 55 years and is the only airline today flying between Guam and Osaka, Fukuoka and Nagoya in Japan, as well as islands in the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau.

With this addition, United will operate six daily flights from Haneda, with service to New York/Newark, Washington D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and now Guam. United also operates 10 daily flights to Tokyo's Narita airport, with service to New York/Newark, Houston, Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Guam, and Saipan. United offers more seats from the United States to Tokyo than any other U.S. airline.

About United

At United, Good Leads The Way. With U.S. hubs in Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, New York/Newark, San Francisco and Washington, D.C., United operates the most comprehensive global route network among North American carriers and is now the largest airline in the world as measured by available seat miles. For more about how to join the United team, please visit www.united.com/careers and more information about the company is at www.united.com. United Airlines Holdings, Inc., the parent company of United Airlines, Inc., is traded on the Nasdaq under the symbol "UAL." ***(PR)***

A bill to erect new monument honoring Vietnam vets receives unanimous support

The piece of legislation that would allow a local nonprofit organization to establish a monument in Hagatna to honor the 77 sons of Guam and all Vietnam veterans is headed to the governor's desk for her signature after being passed by the 37th Guam Legislature during this afternoon's regular session at the Guam Congress Building in Hagatna.

Bill 170-37, introduced by Democrat Senator Dwayne T.D. San Nicolas, is an act to authorize the Independent Vietnam Veterans Association of Guam to use a portion of the Skinner Plaza to establish the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Monument.

The legislation, Bill 170-37, unanimously passed on Friday afternoon.

"Thank you to all my legislative colleagues in the 37th Guam Legislature for voting today to pass this bill that will not only honor but remember the Vietnam veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice to serve our island and country during this long and dark conflict," said San Nicolas, a veteran, who's also the chairman of the legislative Committee on Emergency Response, Border Safety, Military and Veteran Affairs, and Mayors' Council of Guam. "It's our time to honor and remember the sacrifices made by many Americans, including our dear people of Guam, through this memorial monument."

The government of Guam will not be responsible for any expenses related to the construction of the authorized monument, if signed into Guam law, according to the bill.

Additionally, Bill 81-37, authored by San Nicolas was unanimously passed by the body. The bill is an act to authorize the Mayors' Council of Guam to select the time and date for the mayors and vice mayor's oathtaking ceremony. It is co-sponsored by Sens. Telo Taitague, Thomas Fisher, Jesse Lujan, William Parkinson, Roy Quinata, Joanne Brown, Chris Barnett, Christopher Duenas, and Vice Speaker Tina Muna Barnes. ***(PR)***

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

CONFIRMED APPOINTEES

Acting governor David M. Apatang joins a group photo with newly confirmed Superior Court associate judge Lillian A. Tenorio and Marianas Public Land Trust board members Dr. Rita A. Sablan and Alvaro A. Santos, along with their family members, and senators, after the Senate confirmation hearing last Tuesday.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The world can't abandon the fight against malaria

Over the past two decades, the fight against malaria has been among the biggest success stories in global health. Campaigns to prevent and treat infections, particularly in Africa, have saved an estimated 11 million lives since 2000, the vast majority of them young children. Yet that progress has recently stalled—and in some countries, new cases are surging again. At least part of the blame lies with flaws in the most widely used tools for fighting the mosquito-borne disease: bed nets.

More than 3 billion insecticide-coated bed nets have been distributed worldwide in the past 20 years. At just $5 a net, they're responsible for 68% of the reduction in malaria cases since 2000, according to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. One study found that sleeping under bed nets increased babies' chances of survival in malaria-prone regions by 27%.

Those lifesaving gains may now be at risk. As a Bloomberg News investigation reveals, the declining efficacy of bed nets has contributed to an alarming spike in malaria infections. In Papua New Guinea, where malaria cases rose 88% in 2022, researchers found that nets made before 2012 were all effective in killing or incapacitating mosquitoes. But only 17% of those manufactured in the past decade did the same.

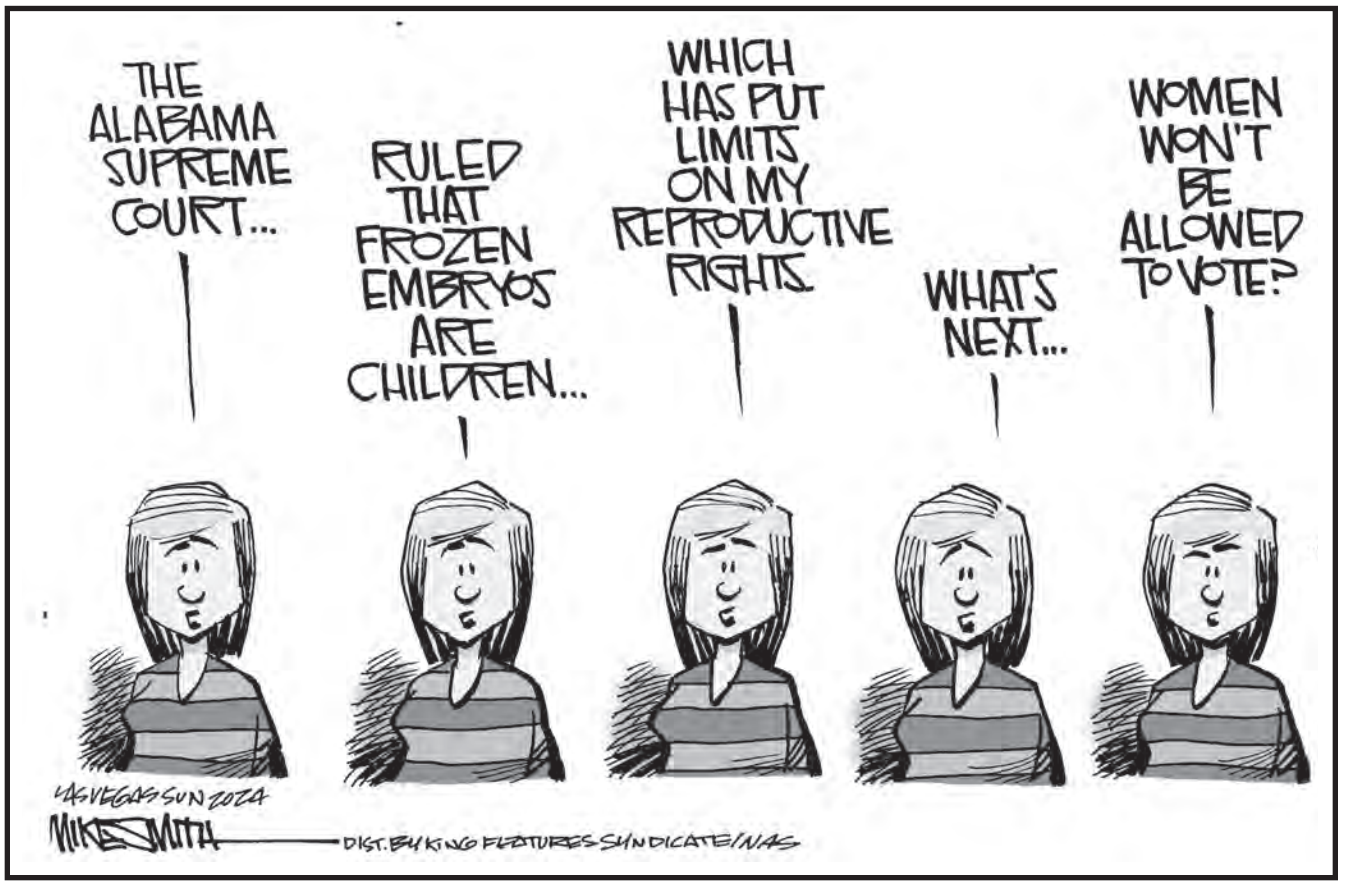
The reason? Vestergaard, the Swiss company that produces PermaNet 2.0—which has been used in Papua New Guinea and more than 100 other countries—switched to a cheaper coating researchers say rendered the insecticide less potent, but it didn't inform the World Health Organization of the change until at least 2017. Despite concerns raised by scientists and aid workers, the company still hasn't acknowledged the waning efficacy of the product, which remains prevalent in poor countries. Governments have also reported defects with nets made by Vestergaard's competitors, including some that were too small, lacked durability or had insufficient amounts of insecticide. (In a statement to Bloomberg News, Vestergaard said the changes made to its nets adhered to the WHO's efficacy standards.)

This cost-cutting may have helped manufacturers' profits, but at a grievous toll to hundreds of thousands of children worldwide.

In response to Bloomberg News' investigation, the WHO says it is "very concerned" about the use of lower-quality bed nets and plans to look into the problem. Given the damage that a resurgence of malaria would cause, more urgent action is warranted. Manufacturers should be required to provide verifiable data to health authorities on the efficacy of the chemicals used on their nets. The WHO should advise governments to limit the distribution of recently manufactured bed nets until research validates their reliability. As the biggest contributor to the Global Fund, the body that coordinates anti-malaria efforts, the US government should push for increased purchases of bed nets treated with multiple insecticides, which can overcome mosquitoes' growing resistance to existing chemicals.

At the same time, the US and other rich nations should redouble efforts to fully eradicate the disease, not just manage it. Production and distribution of promising new vaccines and anti-malaria drugs to high-risk populations should be accelerated. Innovative, longer-term strategies also deserve support, such as the development of genetically engineered mosquitoes able to ward off the malaria parasite and prevent its transmission, a project

See MALARIA on Page 9


THE ALABAMA SUPREME COURT...
RULED THAT FROZEN EMBRYOS ARE CHILDREN...
WHICH HAS PUT LIMITS ON MY REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS
WHAT'S NEXT...
WOMEN WON'T BE ALLOWED TO VOTE?
LAS VEGAS SUN 2024
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A bad case of Putin-envy prevents Trump from calling out death of Navalny

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

Blame America. Blame Joe Biden. Blame Alexei Navalny for his own death. But never blame Vladimir Putin.

Donald Trump's continued refusal to criticize the Russian leader for the death of Russian dissident Navalny is a stunner, even if you have been numbed by Trump's constant pandering to Putin.

Trump's response has been to portray himself as an innocent victim of corrupt U.S. courts and politicians—while continuing to boast about his relationship with the Russian strongman.

No word of criticism for a Russian system of "telephone justice," where a top official calls the judge and dictates the verdict. Not a word about the horrific "Polar Wolf" maximum security penal colony in the freezing Russian Artic, where Navalny was tortured and died under circumstances that may never be clear, especially since the Kremlin is refusing to turn over his body to his family.

No mention from Trump of Putin's decades of killing and/or poisoning dozens of journalists and political opponents. Yet, he managed a slap at Navalny for being foolish enough to return from Berlin to sure arrest in Moscow after being treated for poison administered by Putin's security officials. No comprehension of a principled sacrifice made to fight dictatorship in Russia.

I've heard the explanations of why Trump behaves this way: the embrace of isolationism, Putin as an exemplar for evangelicals of anti-wokeness and "Christian values," a Trumpian desire to hobnob with the big men's club of powerful dictators.

But I believe the real reason is Putin-envy.

How can Trump decry Putin, when the Kremlin killer is only doing exactly what Trump wishes he could do—in perhaps not so lethal terms—if only the U.S. system of checks and balances didn't constrain him? That is, delivering vengeance to his enemies if he wins a second term.

The whole idea was perfectly summed up in the Trump legal team's argument in January before a federal appeals court, claiming former presidents are immune from criminal prosecution, even for murders they ordered while in office.

Judge Florence Pan asked, "Could a president who ordered SEAL Team 6 to assassinate a political rival … be subject to criminal prosecution?" Trump's lawyer, D. John Sauer, effectively said no, unless they had first been impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate. (No president has ever been so convicted.)

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rejected this claim, and Trump has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to temporarily suspend the lower court's action, pending a formal appeal. I have to believe that even this Supreme Court would ultimately reject Trump's premise.

So, one has to ask: What else than Putin-envy could make Trump so unwilling to condemn Navalny's murder and to call Putin out for the killer he is?

You will recall that Trump declared during his 2016 presidential campaign that he "could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and I wouldn't lose any voters."

Long before Navalny's death, the likely GOP presidential candidate had zero moral qualms about leaders who commit murder. Just recall in his 2017 Super Bowl interview with Fox News, when he shoved aside criticism of Putin as a "killer" by insisting: "There are a lot of killers. We've got a lot of killers. Do you think our country's so innocent?"

In other words, after 17 years of Putin—after opposition leader Boris Nemtsov had been shot dead in front of the Kremlin, after high profile Russian intelligence defector Alexander Litvinenko had been killed by Russian agents with polonium in London, and dozens of other enemies had been dispatched by Putin at home and abroad—Trump had nothing bad to say about the Russian leader and nothing good to say about America.

Trump's take was echoed by his acolyte Tucker Carlson, after the latter's sycophantic interview with Putin shortly before Navalny's death. Following the interview, Carlson was asked by a TV interviewer in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, why he didn't ask about the imprisoned Navalny or the assassinations of Kremlin opponents.

"Every leader kills people, including my leader," Carlson responded. "Leadership requires killing people."

In the wake of Navalny's death, and his gushing videos praising Moscow supermarkets and subways, Carlson labeled the event "barbaric." Yet, he insisted to London's Daily Mail that "people who say Putin killed him are idiots."

Given that Putin's minions had nearly killed Navalny in 2020 and Putin had ensured the dissident would suffer for decades in a brutal prison, only a "useful idiot" such as Carlson could make such a dumb remark. (The term "useful idiot" was coined by Vladimir Lenin for naive Western intellectuals who blindly followed the Bolsheviks.)

Consider how free Putin believes himself to murder opponents at home or in Europe, as he watches Trump instruct the GOP to cut off aid to Ukraine and threaten to abandon NATO

See NAVALNY on Page 9

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

An appeal for assistance in road to recovery

By ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Special to Saipan Tribune

Arnold I. Palacios is governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Editor's Note: The following is the text of the remarks the author made at the 2024 senior plenary meeting of the Interagency Group on Insular Areas in Washington, D.C.

Hafa adai and *tirow*, Secretary Haaland, assistant secretary Cantor, senior advisor Tom Perez, governors, congressional delegates, and all our federal partners and distinguished guests.

A year ago, I shared with you the considerable challenges facing the Northern Mariana Islands. Upon entering office last year, my administration inherited a financial crisis, a struggling economy, and critical infrastructure in disrepair.

These destabilizing conditions, as they have done in the past, make us vulnerable to external threats, including malicious influence from the Chinese Communist Party.

I emphasized then, as I do today, that our fiscal, economic, and social stability is directly tied to national security and a free and open Indo-Pacific.

We have made strides toward recovery, but there is still much work to do.

To stabilize the government's financial condition, we have implemented cost-containment measures and launched a tax collection task force to raise revenues and bring delinquent taxpayers into compliance.

We have also sought help from federal partners to audit expenditures of federal tax dollars and build local capacity in tax administration and financial investigation.

To support workforce recovery, we have requested approval from the U.S. Department of Labor to extend the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program so that we may complete the issuance of PUA benefits.

We have also asked to use the remaining PUA balance to restore work-hours for government employees, provide payroll assistance for struggling businesses, and explore options for unemployment insurance.

To shore up government operations, we have urged for flexibility in the use of federal 702 funds allotted to the Commonwealth, to enhance both infrastructure and government operations.

That 702 money comes from our negotiations with the federal government. It is the promise of funding to support the Commonwealth's development, enshrined in section 702 of our Covenant.

Today, that 702 money gets divided among the Commonwealth and other territories. I am not asking to take money away from Guam or American Samoa.

But in addition to flexibility, I am asking for a bigger pot of 702 money so we can all get a larger share to support our collective development.

We have made progress in infrastructure projects, including the reconstruction of the Northern Marianas College campus which broke ground last August, and multiple revitalization and highway projects.

Last week we began construction of a new carbon filtration system to treat "forever chemicals," or PFAS, which affect the water supply of more than half our population. This remediation project is a good start, but we need help developing long-term solutions to the PFAS problem, including but not limited to reverse osmosis powered by clean and affordable energy.

We have also been working to enhance our main industry—tourism. I have spent the past few months engaging government and industry leaders in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan as part of this effort.

I ask the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Economic Development Authority to facilitate the release of EDA funds so that crucial economic development and destination enhancement projects can move forward.

I also ask for the continued assistance of the departments of State and Commerce to reinvigorate tourism and investment from allied nations.

Additionally, we need help improving air service within and to the Marianas. A 30-minute economy class trip between Saipan and Guam should not cost $600.

I appeal to the departments of Transportation and the Interior to advocate for the Commonwealth's designation as an Essential Air Service community.

With the help of federal partners, we expect to achieve other milestones in sustainable development, from climate action and clean energy to broadband and transportation.

Last month we signed a directive launching the Commonwealth's Green Growth Initiative. By Earth Day we will unveil our Green Growth Strategic Framework to propel our sustainable development goals into action.

At the start of my administration, I announced a pivot away from over-reliance on China to focus on strengthening ties with federal partners and regional allies.

Our economic recovery has been promising but slow, and the pressure to return to the China market persists.

A quicker recovery will enhance our resilience against external threats, and strengthen our nation's position in the region.

I look forward to tangible commitments from federal partners in securing a prosperous and sustainable Marianas, America's gateway to the Indo-Pacific.

Si yu'us ma'a'se', ghilisow, and thank you.

Democracy demands well-funded investigative journalism

By KEVIN FRAZIER
The Fulcrum

Kevin Frazier is an assistant professor at the Crump College of Law at St. Thomas University. He previously clerked for the Montana Supreme Court.

Investigative journalism, which is critical to a healthy democracy, comes at a high cost. The return on investment, though, is substantial. Ida Tarbell's willingness to dig into Standard Oil's egregious business practices bolstered efforts to pass the Clayton Antitrust Act and to create the Federal Trade Commission. Upton Sinclair's daring investigation into the meatpacking plants of Chicago likewise resulted in a long overdue regulatory response.

These and other muckrakers sacrificed to provide the public with the information required to fulfill democratic duties—to identify communal problems, to debate solutions and to monitor the effectiveness of those solutions.

More than a century later, the costs of investigative journalism have only increased. A Washington Post exposé on the D.C. police, for instance, required a team of nine reporters, editors and specialists, involved eight months of research and investigation, and cost nearly $500,000. The resulting changes to police practices may have produced $73.6 million in societal benefits—and that's a conservative estimate. The expense and the returns of the Post's story are not atypical. It often takes six months to produce an investigative news piece. Yet, such reporting can lead to swift and significant regulatory responses.

Those benefits, though, often don't carry over to the publisher's bottom line. As recounted by Professor Neil Netenal:

"[I]n 2016, the non-profit news magazine Mother Jones spent some $350,000 to produce an in-depth investigation exposing the brutal working conditions for inmates in private prisons. The blockbuster story ... attracted more than a million readers and triggered a Department of Justice announcement that it would end its use of private prisons. Despite the piece's impact, Mother Jones earned only $5,000 in revenue from the banner ads that ran with the piece."

Clearly, from the perspective of publishers, investigative journalism doesn't pencil out. That's a huge problem for society. Think of the abuses that have gone uncovered, the wrongs that haven't been righted and the practices that have perpetuated because of inadequate support for this sort of democratic digging. The list of topics that should have and could have been covered sooner and in more detail is long. And, importantly, that list is likely to be longer in the thousands of communities that lack any sort of local newspaper, let alone an investigative journalism team.

Thankfully, private and nonprofit organizations aren't parking in the reserve lot—they're driving change by funding new and necessary efforts to train and support investigative journalists. The Tarbell Fellowship, which embeds early-career journalists in newsrooms, is a great example. Fellows spend 12 months covering pressing societal topics, such as governance of emerging technologies. More generally, fellows are expected to cover problems that, if solved, would have a huge impact, that are capable of being addressed in a relatively timely fashion, and are currently being undercovered. Perhaps most importantly, thanks to financial support from Open Philanthropy this extra investigatory news power comes at no cost to the publisher.

I don't think it was a coincidence that Benjamin Franklin, himself a publisher, is alleged to have said that the Founders gave us democracy, "if we can keep it." Franklin, Tarbell, Sinclair and other muckrakers understood the costs—and the benefits—of quality journalism. The rest of us have missed our deadline, but there's still time to act. You can support Open Philanthropy, advocate for government grants to investigative journalism and financially back your local paper. Here's to headlines that matter and journalism that informs rather than enrages.

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MALARIA

From page 8

spearheaded by the Johns Hopkins Malaria Research Institute. (The institute is funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies.)

All this will require more funding—but the need is manageable. Total spending on malaria in 2022 was roughly half the WHO's annual target of $7.8 billion. That's a pittance relative to the benefits of preventing needless deaths, giving scores of children a chance to reach adulthood, and limiting the emergence of more virulent strains of the disease. The world has made great progress against malaria. It shouldn't give up now.

NAVALNY

From page 8

members to Russian attack.

This week, the bullet-riddled body of Maksim Kuzminov, a Russian military defector, was found in Spain, where he had been living. After Kuzminov flew his Mi-8 helicopter to Ukraine in August, interviews on Russian state-controlled TV made clear he would be assassinated. He should have remained in Ukraine.

In Carlson's interview, Putin suggested he might be open to swapping Wall Street Journal correspondent Evan Gershkovich, who is being held on trumped-up spying charges, if Germany released a Russian agent who fatally shot a former Chechen rebel in broad daylight in a Berlin park in 2019. In other words, the release of an American hostage depends on whether Germany permits a Russian assassin to go free.

Meantime, inside Russia, a prominent pro-war Russian blogger has reportedly died by "suicide" this week after he angered the Kremlin by posting that the Russian army lost 16,000 soldiers during its recent capture of the eastern Ukrainian city of Avdiivka. (The Kremlin keeps military casualty figures secret.)

Russians joke grimly that "suicide" means "either tea or the window," meaning poison or defenestration. Even pro-war Russians are at risk of being murdered if they utter any truths or embarrassing statistics.

This is the Kremlin regime that Trump and Carlson claim is superior to our democratic system. This is the modus operandi—Putin's political murder at will—that Trump and Carlson justify by saying every leader does it, even in America.

That is a grotesque lie so long as our imperfect system retains independent courts, a Congress that functions, and fact-based media that aren't overtaken by internet conspiracy mongers.

Trump's disdain for Navalny and the embrace of his killer makes clear the risk America is facing: electing a man infected with Putin-envy in 2024.

74 kids obtain free dental services from Saipan SDA Clinic

By NHORLEEN BITCO-LILLES
SPECIAL TO SAIPAN TRIBUNE

A total of 74 children were able to obtain free dental care from the Saipan Seventh-day Adventist Dental Clinic last Sunday, Feb. 18, as part of the clinic's observance of the annual Give Kids A Smile, which aims to provide oral health care to underserved children.

The program, which is an opportunity offered to children in the CNMI community who do not have Medicaid or other dental insurance, was able to serve 74 patients ages 18 and below who received recommended oral health services such as dental exams, extractions, fillings, cleanings, and fluoride treatment. The rest of the children who weren't able to get treatment were given giveaways like toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss donated by D&Q.

More than a hundred children with their parents lined up early at the Saipan SDA Dental Clinic for the Give Kids A Smile campaign, which is part of the nationwide Give Kids a Smile program that the American Dental Association has conducted since 2002.

Give Kids a Smile is a yearly dental outreach of the Saipan SDA Clinic held every February and more than 200 underserved children have already received free oral health care since then.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan SDA Dental Clinic staff and volunteers pose for a photo after serving 74 children at the Give Kids A Smile free dental program last Feb. 18.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Registered dental hygienist Mikayla Lopez performs child prophylaxis during the Give Kids A Smile free dental clinic event last Feb. 18 at the Saipan SDA Dental Clinic.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Clinic director Dr. Bukaris Anugerah tends to a young patient while being assisted by dental assistant Shana Mettao and dental therapist Frank Diesta at the Give Kids A Smile free dental clinic event last Feb. 18 at the Saipan SDA Dental Clinic.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Registered dental hygienist Maria Agulto performs child prophylaxis during the Give Kids A Smile free dental clinic event last Feb. 18 at the Saipan SDA Dental Clinic.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

More than a hundred children with their parents lined up early for a chance to avail of the Give Kids A Smile free dental program of the Saipan SDA Dental Clinic last Feb. 18.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Registered dental hygienist Florida Mpayamaguru performs child prophylaxis during the Give Kids A Smile free dental clinic event last Feb. 18 at the Saipan SDA Dental Clinic.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan SDA Dental Clinic's reception area was filled with patients waiting to be served during the Give Kids A Smile free dental program last Feb. 18.

Help keep kids' teeth cavity-free with these tips

By KATE SEQUEIRA
LOS ANGELES TIMES

It's no secret that sugar is bad for teeth. But the effects of poor dental health extend far beyond a treat-heavy holiday like Halloween.

Dental issues are a leading cause of absence from school, but parents can fend off sugar's role in dental decay and infections, Venice Family Clinic dental director Dr. Jaspreet Kaur said.

"Teach your kids that they can enjoy the treats, but in balance," she said.

Here are some tips from dentists for keeping your child's mouth healthy beyond just Halloween:

1 Avoid chewy, sticky, hard and sour treats

Candies that are chewy or sticky tend to stay in a child's mouth longer than others. Soft, taffy-like candy, caramel and gummies get caught between teeth or in their grooves. Hard candies, like lollipops that children suck on, linger longer in the mouth.

When the candy isn't washed or brushed away quickly it produces acid, which can break down the enamel that protects teeth and causes cavities, according to Dr. Santos Cortez, a pediatric dentist in Long Beach. Sour candies are extra damaging because they not only introduce sugar to the mouth, but also acids when first eaten.

The texture issues don't just apply to candy either. That packet of raisins in your child's trick-or-treat bag isn't necessarily a better option. The sticky texture of the raisins causes the sugar to stick to the teeth in the same way as candy, making the mouth more susceptible to cavities, Cortez said.

Juice and soda are also a problem. Like with hard candies, the sugar may stay on your child's teeth for a while, especially if they take a long time to drink it, which means the teeth are exposed longer.

Opt instead for sweets like chocolate—dark chocolate if you can. Chocolate, as long as it isn't mixed with something like caramel, tends to melt in the mouth faster and is easier to brush off.

2 Drink lots of water.

Have your child drink water after eating candy. The water can help wash away some of the residue left behind by the sweet treat, according to Cortez. Keep a bottle handy to have your child sip and wash off some of the stickiness. That will help reduce sugars until they are able to brush their teeth.

Make a habit of having them drink water any time they consume sugar and can't brush right away. Instead of bottled water, give them tap water, which should contain fluoride to help stave off dental decay.

3 Of course, brush their teeth

Make sure your child brushes their teeth as soon as possible after eating candy or anything sweet. If your child is determined to brush on their own, let them, but make sure to get in there afterward to remove plaque. Continue to brush your child's teeth for them until they are 8 years old, using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Using a fluoride toothpaste helps combats the effects of sugar.

In baby teeth, cavities tend to develop between teeth, so be sure to help you child floss once they're ready.

If you have a baby whose first tooth is just appearing, brush it with a small smear of fluoride toothpaste on a baby toothbrush twice a day—just enough to color the bristles. For infants without teeth, dentists recommend wiping their gums with a clean cloth after feedings.

Remember, taking care of baby teeth is just as important as taking care of the permanent teeth. Problems that affect the baby teeth now can affect the permanent teeth later on if not addressed.

4 Set rules on candy

Set rules about how much candy your child can consume—a small amount daily. It's better to let them eat a piece or two at once rather than allowing them to snack on sugary treats multiple times throughout the day, according to pediatric dentist Dr. Alexander Alcaraz, the program director of pediatric dentistry at USC Ostrow School of Dentistry. Constant and long exposures to sugar feed the bacteria that develop cavities. Saliva also needs time to neutralize the acids in the mouth that can break down the enamel.

Kaur also recommends limiting the time a child sucks on hard candy such as a lollipop. Some kids will suck on candy for up to half an hour. Opt for 10 minutes, for example, she said.

5 Have them eat candy with a meal

Leave candy—or any sweets for that matter—for an after-meal snack. When kids eat, more saliva is produced, which can better wash away the goodies. It might make it easier to remember to have your kids brush their teeth soon afterward as well, since many parents have kids brush their teeth after a meal.

Some foods also have self-cleaning qualities. Fruits and vegetables like apples, celery and carrot sticks rub into the enamel when you bite into them, removing plaque.

6 Exchange the candy

Limit how long the candy bag is available so your child does not get used to having it within reach. Remove some of the candy your child collected or trade it all for a toy or extra play time. Check if your dentist or another group is sponsoring a candy donation effort.

You can also take part in a new tradition and invite the "Switch Witch" into your home. Have you child put aside some of their candy for the Switch Witch, who'll visit overnight to pick up the candy and leave something fun in its place. You can leave a toy for them to find the next morning.

"Cavities don't happen overnight," Alcaraz said. "It takes time. It's not a one-day process."

7 Go to the dentist

After the first baby tooth emerges or your child reaches age 1, it's time to see the dentist, who can add a coat of fluoride varnish to strengthen tooth enamel.

A dentist will let you know early on, for example, to avoid putting an infant to bed with a bottle of milk or formula because the liquid can sit on their teeth, and the sugars cause cavities, sometimes even before the first tooth emerges.

Developing a relationship with dentists with an appointment every six months will also help keep you better informed as they grow. For young kids, the goal is to set strategies for families to keep the teeth healthy and reduce risk of gum disease and dental decay, Cortez said.

Ask the dentist to apply sealants to a child's back molars around the age of 6, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health recommends. The thin coating can protect the chewing surface of the teeth from developing cavities.

"It's the most common chronic disease in children, more common than asthma," Cortez said about dental decay, which affects more than 60% of kids in California by third grade. "We need to pay more attention. And so for pediatric dentists anyway, and for all dentistry, I think that the key is to start early."

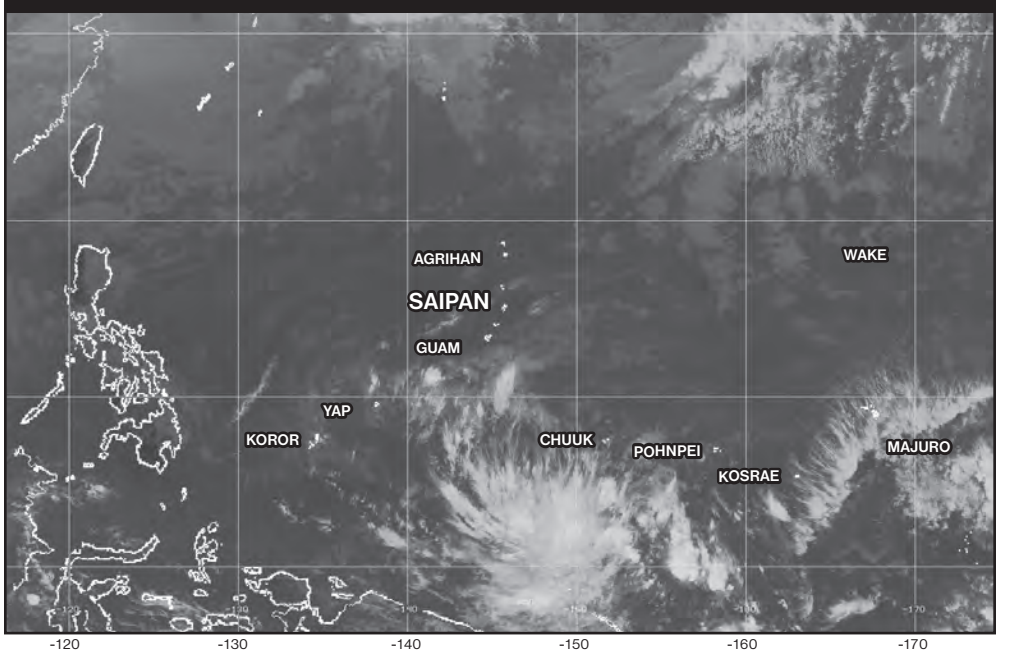
Healthy Smile Tips:
Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
Clean between your teeth daily.
Eat healthy food and limit sugary beverages.
See your dentist at least twice a year.
American Dental Association
Colgate
DISTRIBUTED BY
MBI
MICRONESIAN BROKERS INC.
Contact Us: Tel: (670) 322-3018 | Fax: (670) 322-0317

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy. Isolated showers. northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy. Isolated showers. northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Breezy at times. Partly cloudy with 10 percent chance of showers.	Breezy at times. Partly cloudy with 10 percent chance of showers.	Breezy at times. Partly cloudy with 10 percent chance of showers.
86 75°	86 75°	86 75°	86 75°	86 75°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:57 AM SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite IR shows broken low to mid-level clouds over the Marianas. Patchy light to moderate showers were mainly east to southeast, and well southwest of Guam. Surface winds are moderate and gradient winds are from east-northeast at about 20 kt. Tanapag buoy shows combined seas around 6 ft from the northeast. Weather remains stormy over the Northern Pacific.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	83° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°
Chuuk	Showers	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Showers	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	84° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	83° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Sunny	75° / 61°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	45° / 27°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	72° / 64°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	81° / 64°
London	Showers	48° / 39°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	65° / 52°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 72°
Melbourne	Sunny	93° / 63°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 66°
New York	Partly Cloudy	35° / 22°
Osaka	Sunny	54° / 39°
Paris	Showers	50° / 43°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	48° / 30°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	61° / 50°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	69° / 47°
San Francisco	Cloudy	42° / 22°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	43° / 23°
Tokyo	Sunny	55° / 36°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	44° / 29°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Tuesday	6:35 AM	6:23 PM
Wednesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	6:25 AM	6:13 PM
Tuesday	-	7:00 AM	7:00 PM
Wednesday	-	7:34 AM	7:45 PM
Thursday	-	8:06 AM	8:31 PM
Friday	-	9:49 AM	10:55 PM

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:53 AM	Low Tide	0.01
9:17 AM	High Tide	1.67
3:17 PM	Low Tide	0.67
8:39 PM	High Tide	1.65

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	3:10AM	10:30PM	4, 7 via ICN
7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily
OZ626	3:10AM	6:55AM	4,7
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3461	2:40PM	6:45PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
OZ702/625	12:05PM	1:40AM+1	3, 6 via ICN
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3462	11:15PM	1:30PM+1	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3462	08:00AM	1:30PM	Daily Feb 7-16 only
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20PM	1:40AM+1	3, 6
7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

UOG launches second group of dorm corps members

The University of Guam Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant, in collaboration with Guam Green Growth, launched the second cohort of its region-focused G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps.

The event was held on Monday, Feb. 19, at the UOG Residence Halls.

The G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps is specifically designed to equip university dorm residents from the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands with the skills and knowledge necessary for the emerging green economy while addressing pressing environmental concerns in the region.

UOG

Austin Shelton, director of the Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant at the University of Guam, speaks about the importance of the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps in advancing the broader movement toward sustainability. The program launched its second cohort on Monday, Feb. 19, at the UOG Residence Halls.

UOG

Senior vice president and provost Sharleen Santos-Bamba of the University of Guam welcomes the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps. The program launched its second cohort on Monday, Feb. 19, at the UOG Residence Halls.

UOG

Members of the second cohort of the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps gather for a photo with program leadership, University of Guam and government representatives at the launch event on Monday, Feb. 19, at the UOG Residence Halls.

UOG

Alyshia Lebehn, a public health student from the Federated States of Micronesia, speaks about the opportunities that are available to the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps. Lebehn and three other new members were introduced at the launching of the program's second cohort on Monday, Feb. 19, at the UOG Residence Halls.

Corps members will receive practical training across various sustainability themes. Focus areas will include agriculture, aquaculture, island beautification, invasive species mitigation, reforestation, circular economy practices, ocean conservation, and harnessing renewable energy.

Additionally, they will participate in activities that promote civic engagement and leadership.

Merairei expressed his interest in learning more about addressing invasive species, a significant issue in Palau. "That's the problem in Palau right now, how to control (invasive) vines that are growing in trees," he said.

Austin Shelton, director of the UOG Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant, stated, "This program is not just about one-way learning. As you embark on this journey, you will impart your unique island perspectives from your homes, enriching our community with diverse insights."

Shelton also underscored the crucial role of the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps in advancing the broader movement toward achieving the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in Guam and the region.

The U.S. Department of State via the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program provided federal funding to establish the G3 Local2030 Islands Network Conservation Corps. ***(PR)***

Community input welcome during accreditation team visit to UOG, Saipan

The University of Guam is hosting a site visit by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission between Wednesday, Feb. 28, and Friday, March 1, 2024.

Comments from members of the Guam and Northern Marianas communities will be considered as the accreditation team undertakes its work and develops recommendations for UOG.

In addition to the WSCUC team's visit to the UOG campus, its members will also visit Saipan where UOG offers programs including Master of Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, and CHamoru Studies.

WSCUC accreditation aids institutions in developing and sustaining effective educational programs and assures the educational community and the general public that an accredited institution has met high standards of quality and effectiveness.

UOG

The University of Guam campus is seen with the ocean off Pago Bay in the background.

UOG last received a reaffirmation of its accreditation on July 8, 2016. After almost eight years, it's time for another WSCUC accreditation visit. Receiving public input is part of its process.

To write to the WSCUC team about your input or comment about UOG, address your email to: uog@wscuc.org

The email can only receive comments but cannot be used to set up private appointments or send queries. This email account will close once the WSCUC Accreditation team's visit ends on March 1, 2024. ***(PR)***

GCC to host College & Career Night on Wednesday

» Open to all parents/guardians and high school students

Guam Community College will be hosting a "Family Road Map to College and Career Night" Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024, from 6pm to 7:30pm at the GCC Multi-Purpose Auditorium (Bldg. 300). The event aims to share parents/guardians and their high school teens with the opportunities and services available to them through GCC's post-secondary programs

The informational session will provide helpful tips to make the transition from high school to college at GCC as seamless as possible. After the presentation, participants will have the opportunity to walk through the MPA to the different program and service booths and ask questions that can help students hit the ground running when they enter GCC as a college student.

Just some questions to ask at the event:

- What job opportunities are available for the programs you are interested in?
- How long will your program take to complete?
- How much does going to school cost and is there help in paying for the courses?
- Are there any short programs I can take so I go straight into work?
- After completing my GCC degree program, can my courses transfer to another college/university?

Whatever questions you have about GCC, our faculty, staff, and counselors can help you find the answer. Let us help you create your Family Roadmap to College or Career success.

For more information, contact John Dela Rosa, GCC assistant director of Communications & Promotions, at 671-735-5638 (office), 671-482-4320 (cell), or john.delarosa@guamcc.edu. ***(PR)***

Health & Wellness

Women may benefit from exercise more than men do

DREAMSTIME

The Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported the life expectancy of men in 2021 was 73.5 years, and 79.3 years for women. Female life expectancy rose from a 5.1-year advantage over men in 2019 to 5.8 years in 2022.

By HUNTER BOYCE
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Women may benefit more from exercise than men do, according to a 2024 observational study supported by the National Institutes of Health. The fact that women live longer than men is an old adage, but it's one founded in science.

The Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported the life expectancy of men in 2021 was 73.5 years, and 79.3 years for women. Female life expectancy rose from a 5.1-year advantage over men in 2019 to 5.8 years in 2022.

Now, researchers say they have reason to believe exercise could be a factor.

"Even a limited amount of regular exercise can provide a major benefit, and it turns out this is especially true for women," researcher Dr. Susan Cheng told theNIH. "Taking some regular time out for exercise, even if it's just 20-30 minutes of vigorous exercise a few times each week, can offer a lot more gain than they may realize."

The researchers said multiple factors might account for the difference in exercise outcomes, including anatomy and physiology. For instance, women may face additional respiratory, metabolic and strength demands to perform the same exercises as men, who often naturally have more lung capacity, larger hearts and more lean body mass.

According to the study, women derived greater gain in all-cause and cardiovascular mortality risk reduction from equivalent physical activity.

"This study emphasizes that there is no singular approach for exercise," Eric J. Shiroma, Sc.D., a program director in the clinical applications and prevention branch at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, told the NIH. "A person's physical activity needs and goals may change based on their age, health status, and schedule—but the value of any type of exercise is irrefutable."

Healthy Living

Get juiced? *While proponents say juicing helps your body absorb nutrients, no sound scientific evidence has shown that it is better for you than eating whole fruits and vegetables.*

On the other hand ...

- You may want to try juicing if you don't like to eat fresh fruits and vegetables, or if you want to sample ones you haven't tried
- Make only as much as you can drink at one time since fresh juice develops harmful bacteria quickly
- If you buy commercially made fresh juice, make sure it is pasteurized
- Check the sugar content of the juice; some are high in sugar, which can add unwanted calories

Source: Mayo Clinic, TNS Photo Service

Can you prevent cancer with lifestyle changes?

By DEEDEE STIEPAN
Mayo Clinic News Network

In the U.S., 4 out of 10 cancer cases are associated with preventable risk factors. That's according to the latest Cancer Progress Report from the American Association for Cancer Research. February is National Cancer Prevention Month, and Dr. Jon Ebbert, medical director of the Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence Center, says it's never too late to make lifestyle changes that can decrease your risk of cancer.

What do tobacco, alcohol and obesity have in common? They can all increase your risk of developing cancer. Smoked tobacco is strongly linked to cancer in almost every part of the body.

"Smoked tobacco produces about 7,000 chemicals, and when you inhale those chemicals in your body, they cause alterations in cells. And it's those alterations in cells that can lead to cancer," says Dr. Ebbert.

He says smoking also weakens your immune system, making it harder to fight cancer cells. One of the best ways to lower your cancer risk is to not use any kind of tobacco.

"We always say it's never too late to stop smoking. And the risk for cancer after quitting cigarette smoking, for example, goes down. But it takes some time," says Dr. Ebbert.

Consuming alcohol increases your risk of breast, head and neck, esophageal, and colorectal cancers.

"At every level of alcohol consumption, there is cancer risk, but heavier drinkers have higher cancer risk than lighter drinkers," says Dr. Ebbert.

Finally, packing on extra pounds can increase your risk of cancer in several ways.

"Excess body weight increases estrogen and insulin, which can increase the rate of cellular division, which can increase the risk for cancer. But also, excess body weight is associated with inflammation, and inflammation is a known risk factor for the development of cancer," says Dr. Ebbert.

Bariatric surgery has been shown to decrease risk of hormone-related cancers such as breast, endometrial and prostate, as well as pancreatic and colorectal cancers. However, there are less drastic steps people can take.

"Small sustainable steps toward weight loss are the most effective when we think about diet and exercise. Those are the classic approaches, but also there are new medications on the market that can help people lose weight," says Dr. Ebbert.

Food for a happy heart

ON NUTRITION

BY BARBARA INTERMILL
Tribune News Service

Barbara Intermill is a registered dietitian nutritionist and syndicated columnist. She is the author of Quinn-Essential Nutrition: The Uncomplicated Science of Eating. *Email her at barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com.*

It's only about the size of your fist. Yet it pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood throughout your body every day. If you could stretch out the complex network of blood vessels in your body through which your heart pumps oxygen and nutrients, it would extend over 60,000 miles.

Pretty amazing, these hearts of ours. And pretty sad when they get sick. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death and disease for both men and women in the U.S. As of 2021 statistics, one in every five deaths each year was due to heart disease.

Yet here's another amazing fact. An estimated 80% of heart attacks and strokes could have been prevented, according to the World Heatlth Organization.

How to do that is nothing we haven't heard before. Eat a healthful diet. Get regular physical activity. (At least 30 minutes a day.) Don't use tobacco. (The risk for a heart attack or stroke begins to drop immediately after you stop using tobacco, says the WHO.)

EYEWAVE

It's only about the size of your fist. Yet it pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood throughout your body every day. If you could stretch out the complex network of blood vessels in your body through which your heart pumps oxygen and nutrients, it would extend over 60,000 miles.

So…what is a healthful diet? One proven to lower blood pressure and keep blood cholesterol in a normal range, says the American Heart Association. One such diet is the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) eating plan.

Spoiler alert: If you detest fruits and vegetables, get over it. Among other benefits, these foods are vital to blood pressure control. Most adults should aim for 4 to 5 servings (about 2 to 3 cups) of vegetables every day. Ditto for fruit.

Dairy foods (2 to 3 daily servings of low fat milk, cheese or yogurt) are also part of the DASH plan, based on findings that the synergy between these and other foods are favorable for heart health.

Eat nuts, seeds and legumes 4 to 5 times a week. They provide heart-healthy fat and cholesterol-lowering dietary fiber.

DASH guidelines also recommend 1 or 2 fish meals a week along with a variety of other protein foods such as poultry, eggs and lean meats—emphasis on lean.

Modest (3 ounce) servings of lean meats are low in calories and saturated fat while providing protein (the heart is a muscle, remember) and other essential nutrients. And lest you think this limits your choices, there at least 29 cuts of meat that meet the United States Department of Agriculture's definition for lean, including sirloin, round, tenderloin and even tri-tip.

Healthy hearts also thrive on a fair share of (6 to 8 servings a day) of grains, whole grains when possible. Choose a variety of cereals, rice, pasta and breads for the most benefit.

Fats? Focus on vegetable-based oils and dressings in small amounts (1 to 2 tablespoons a day).

Even occasional sweets (no more than 5 servings a week) can fit into a heart healthy eating plan, according to DASH recommendations. Caution, though. A serving is just one tablespoon of jam, jelly or sugar.

Lastly, limit alcohol, as it can increase blood pressure when consumed in excess. Best to go by your doc's recommendations on this one.

Life & Style

‘Oppenheimer,’ Lily Gladstone win at 30th Screen Actors Guild Awards

By JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

AP

Lily Gladstone accepts the award for outstanding performance by a female actor in a leading role for "Killers of the Flower Moon" during the 30th annual Screen Actors Guild Awards on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024, at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

“Oppenheimer” continued to steamroll through Hollywood’s awards season on Saturday, winning the top prize, for outstanding cast, along with awards for Cillian Murphy and Robert Downey Jr., at the 30th Screen Actors Guild Awards.

As the Academy Awards draw closer, Christopher Nolan’s blockbuster biopic—already a winner at the Golden Globes and the BAFTAs—has increasingly looked like the run-away favorite. The SAG Awards, one of the most telling Oscar predictors, will only add to the momentum for “Oppenheimer,” the lead Academy Awards nominee with 13 nods.

The SAG Awards were streamed live on Netflix, a first for a major Hollywood award show. That made for some significant tweaks to the age-old traditions of such ceremonies. There were no ads. Profanity was permitted. (“Don’t say anything you wouldn’t say in front of Oprah,” said Idris Elba.) And winners were occasionally interviewed backstage by red-carpet co-host Tan France—sometimes awkwardly, sometimes charmingly.

The SAG Awards don’t always signify Oscar success. Two of the last five winners from the guild (“The Trial of the Chicago 7” and “Black Panther”) lost at the Academy Awards. But in the past two years, all five of the top SAG prizes—best ensemble and the four acting winners—have corresponded with the eventual Oscar winners, including the ensembles for “Everything Everywhere All at Once” and “CODA.”

That could mean the SAGs offered an Oscar preview in two of the closest contests: best actor and best actress.

The night’s most thrilling win went to Lily Gladstone for female actor in a leading role in Martin Scorsese’s “Killers of the Flower Moon.” No category has been more hotly contested, with analysts evenly split between Gladstone and Emma Stone for “Poor Things.”

But Gladstone won Saturday and the crowd erupted. Stone, too, stood and vigorously applauded. More is riding on Gladstone than perhaps any other Oscar contender this year. Her win would be a first for Native Americans.

“We bring empathy into a world that so much needs it,” said Gladstone. “It’s so easy to distance ourselves. It’s so easy to close off, to stop feeling. And we all bravely keep feeling. And that humanizes people. That brings people out of the shadows. It brings visibility.”

Murphy and Paul Giamatti (“The Holdovers”) have also been seen as in a neck-and-neck contest. But Murphy has now won at the SAGs, the BAFTAs and Globes, suggesting he has the clear edge heading into the Academy Awards.

Downey Jr. and Da’Vine Joy Randolph each won for their supporting performances, likewise solidifying their status as Oscar favorites.

“Why me? Why now? Why do things seem to be going my way?” said Downey Jr., accepting his first SAG Award for a film performance. “Unlike my fellow nominees, I will never grow tired from the sound of my own voice.”

Randolph’s performance in Alexander Payne’s “The Holdovers” has been a breakthrough role for the 37-year-old actor. Now, she appears poised to win the Academy Award.

“To every actor out there still waiting in the wings for their chance, let me tell you: Your life can change in a day,” Randolph said. “It’s not a question of if but when. Keep going.”

Wendy Williams thanks fans after dementia diagnosis

NEW YORK (AP)—Former talk show host Wendy Williams is thanking well-wishers for their response to the revelation she has been diagnosed with dementia and ahead of the airing of Lifetime documentary about her struggles.

"I want to say I have immense gratitude for the love and kind words I have received after sharing my diagnosis of Aphasia and Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD). Let me say, wow! Your response has been overwhelming," Williams said in a statement released to The Associated Press through a representative for her care team. "The messages shared with me have touched me, reminding me of the power of unity and the need for compassion."

Williams' statement came a day after her team revealed the 59-year-old has been diagnosed with primary progressive aphasia and frontotemporal dementia.

It also came hours after a New York judge ruled that Lifetime's "Where is Wendy Williams?" documentary will air this weekend as scheduled. The order signed by an appellate judge, who was reviewing a petition to block the documentary's release, says such a ruling would be an "impermissible prior restraint on speech that violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution."

The ruling clears Lifetime's two-night broadcast plan for "Where is Wendy Williams?," which includes footage of the former talk show host and interviews.

An attorney for Williams' guardian did not immediately return an email seeking comment Friday.

"Lifetime appeared in court today, and the documentary 'Where is Wendy Williams?' will air this weekend as planned," the network said in a statement.

"I continue to need personal space and peace to thrive," Williams said in her statement Friday. "Please just know that your positivity and encouragement are deeply appreciated."

She credited the Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration for its support and efforts to educate the public about the disease, which is the same form of dementia Bruce Willis has, after her diagnosis was announced.

Husband’s new dog is the apple of his eye

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been together almost 20 years. I used to be happy in our relationship, but over the last year or two, he has changed. He gives me no physical affection and constantly showers love on his new dog. When I ask for more affection, he accuses me of being jealous of the dog. I’m not! I love the dog, too. I’m just sick of asking for more from him and not getting it.

I used to feel hurt. Now I feel like maybe I should end our marriage. His lack of affection or compliments has turned me cold to him. What should I do?

CRAVING HUMAN AFFECTION

DEAR CRAVING: SOMEthing has changed. Your husband appears to be using the dog to stay away from you. If you can, try to get him to agree to a session with a licensed marriage and family therapist to discuss your issues. If he refuses, schedule some appointments for yourself, to help you rationally decide whether you want to remain married under these circumstances.

If the answer to that question turns out to be no, gather as much information about the assets you and your husband share after almost 20 years of marriage, and contact an attorney.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I was widowed 10 years ago and have been with my boyfriend (a friend of my late husband’s) for nine years. We live together. He’s legally married but lives his life as if he is not. I do not want a commitment, but I do feel his being legally married is interfering with furthering a true relationship. What are your thoughts regarding continuing this relationship?

COMPLICATED IN NEW YORK

DEAR COMPLICATED: Your boyfriend (of nine years!) may be separated, but he’s legally married. Although you say you don’t want a commitment, you deserve a partner who is not attached to someone else. You should have moved on as soon as you knew it wasn’t in his game plan.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I understand sometimes people need time and space. I have a friend who, for the second time, has pushed our friendship aside, claiming he needs “time and space.” I haven’t heard from him in several months. The issue I’m having is, I don’t feel like HE should get to decide when it’s OK to come back into my life at HIS convenience. I’m not a hotel to check in and out of whenever he feels like it.

If/when he decides to contact me again, like he did the last time, is it OK for ME to be upset with him this time? I don’t want him to think I am available at his convenience.

BACK AND FORTH IN MASSACHUSETTS

DEAR BACK AND FORTH: Not only should it be OK for you to express that you’re upset, but it would also be OK for you to tell this person you are not a yo-yo and SEVER THE STRING. That way YOU get to decide whether you even want him back and not vice versa.

■■■

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

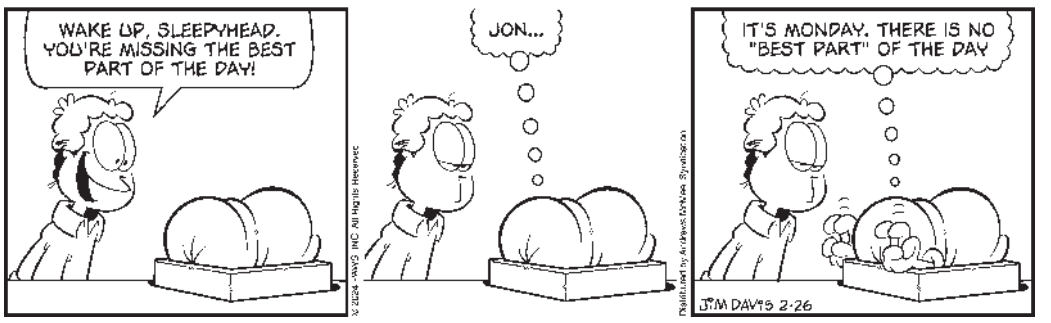
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

SHOULD I STAY INSIDE OR GO OUTSIDE?
IT'S AWFULLY COLD OUT, BUT I SUPPOSE I COULD BUNDLE UP. IT LOOKS WINDY THOUGH. BUT STILL, I'D LIKE TO GO SLEDDING. THEN AGAIN, MAYBE I'D RATHER STAY IN. ON THE OTHER HAND...
GO OUT AND CLOSE THE DOOR!
THE MORE INDECISIVE I AM, THE FASTER THINGS GET DECIDED.
2-26

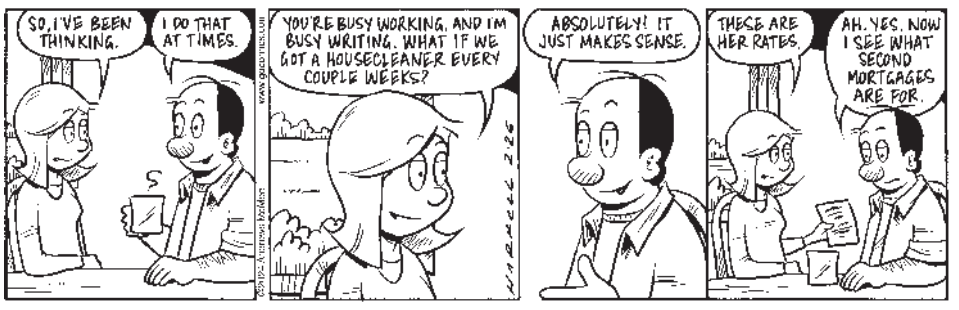
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SO, I'VE BEEN THINKING.
I DO THAT AT TIMES.
YOU'RE BUSY WORKING, AND I'M BUSY WRITING. WHAT IF WE GOT A HOUSECLEANER EVERY COUPLE WEEKS?
ABSOLUTELY! IT JUST MAKES SENSE.
THESE ARE HER RATES.
AH. YES. NOW I SEE WHAT SECOND MORTGAGES ARE FOR.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

WE HAVE NO TABLES AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW.
THAT'S OKAY. WE'LL TAKE WHATEVER'S AVAILABLE.
TELL THE BUSBOY TO GRAB MY CAR KEYS AND GET THE GYM BAG OUT OF THE BACK SEAT!

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Muscat's land
5 Rainbow shape
8 Shark variety
12 Shawnee chief and military leader
14 — incline (tilted)
15 Magnetism
16 Rent
17 Retired jet
18 Horned beasts
20 "Haystacks" painter
23 End-of-week letters
24 God of war
25 Area of London
28 Bubble —
29 Boorish person
30 By means of
32 Elaborate meals
34 Flex
35 "— fair in ..."
36 Dessert wines
37 Swiss cereal
40 Joke
41 Symphonic gp.
42 Murals by Russian artist Marc
47 Villa d'—
48 Diners and bistros, e.g.
49 Art colony in New Mexico
50 —/her/hers
51 Head, to Henri

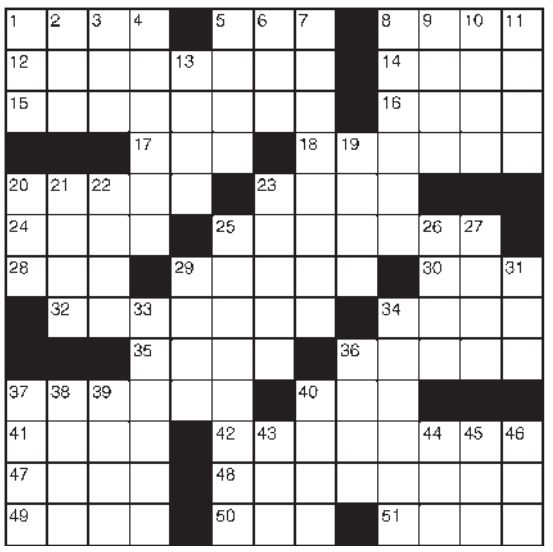
DOWN

1 Like aspirin, briefly
2 "Whatever"
3 Obamacare initialism
4 Sips slowly
5 CEO's aide
6 Sleep phenom
7 Battery rejuvenators
8 Themes
9 Soon, poetically
10 Corn syrup brand
11 Snake eyes, in Vegas
13 Fine spray
19 Mound
20 Wrestling surface
21 Raw minerals
22 Tide type
23 Fall sounds
25 Large goblets
26 Always
27 "If it — broke ..."
29 Honeycomb division
31 Billboards
33 Skin problems
34 "Casablanca" star
36 Senate aide
37 Champagne brand
38 Celestial bear
39 Outside (Pref.)
40 Portal
43 Taunting laugh
44 Fib
45 Rent out
46 Compass dir.

Solution time: 21 mins.

G	A	S		E	B	O	N		S	I	R	I
O	T	T		L	O	R	E		I	R	I	S
P	E	R	F	E	C	T	O		M	A	L	I
		O	L	G	A			T	I	N	E	S
H	A	I	F	Y		T	A	I	I			
F	I	I	F		P	F	R	C	F	I	V	F
M	O	E		R	E	A	M	S		N	I	N
J	E	R	H	O	R	M	S		C	C	C	I
			O	P	U	S		C	O	O	E	D
S	H	A	D	L			P	R	A	M		
I	A	P	D		P	F	R	O	X	I	D	F
E	R	S	E		A	M	O	S		N	I	I
D	E	E	R		M	U	S	S		C	P	A

Last Friday's Answer



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Corinne Bailey Rae, 45; Erykah Badu, 53; Mark Dacascos, 60; Michael Bolton, 71.

Happy Birthday: Use your imagination to find solutions. Take the initiative to follow your plans until you feel comfortable with your results. Refuse to be led by those trying to take advantage of you or part you from your money. Own the spotlight, stand tall, exude confidence and make the world better. Shine brightly and treat others with kindness and compassion. Your numbers are 5, 12, 22, 27, 34, 38, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19)*: Proceed quietly. Don't share too much information until you have your agenda and feel you can establish a solid presentation. Be willing to put your energy to the test. Consider all offers, but change only what's necessary. Keep life simple. The benefits of self-improvement are favored. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20)*: A change of heart will disrupt your plans. Rethink your strategy and align yourself with like-minded people. Going against the grain will leave you treading water instead of making progress. Trust your instincts, not what others are trying to force you to pursue. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20)*: Look at your agenda and put your energy into taking care of your responsibilities. Refuse to let peer pressure or emotional manipulation set in when the most important thing is to get things done on time. Concentrate on looking and feeling your best. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22)*: Stay on top of your bills, expenses and home improvements. You can make headway, but only if you implement a strict budget and oversee projects yourself. Refuse to let your emotions cost you. Don't mix business with pleasure. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22)*: Listen to what others say and offer. Monitor a partnership for imperfections, equality and compatibility. Pay attention to how you present yourself to the world around you. A change someone enforces will reveal their intentions. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)*: Put your energy into something that offers high returns. Money will generate if you make lifestyle changes or acquire qualifications to raise your earning potential. An unusual meeting will reveal valuable information. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)*: Spend time sorting through what you need and can sell. Stop procrastinating and start living up to the promises you made to yourself. Avoid spontaneous purchases or regretful decisions when the bills arrive. Choose simple pleasures. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)*: Don't take on physically draining and time-consuming requests. Stick to projects that make your life easier. Decluttering and having discipline are the paths to positive changes. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)*: Listen carefully and be prepared to walk away from pushy people trying to railroad you into something that benefits them more than you. Take hold of your finances and earmark your dollars to ensure you get the highest return. ✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)*: Clear up misunderstandings, and decline joint ventures that are intrusive to how you like to handle your financial affairs. Make home improvements that contribute to a peaceful state of mind and that encourage you to spend more time doing what you enjoy most. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)*: Think before you act. Excess will drag you down. Hold on to your cash, and don't share private matters. Say no to emotional meddling and walk away from unsavory situations. Arguing wastes time; follow through with what makes a difference to you. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20)*: Focus on what's important to you. Your success depends on your decisions and treating yourself and others with respect. Make a positive footprint, and your impact on others will help pave the way to a better future. Believe and trust in yourself. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are wise, determined and visionary. You are giving and influential.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

3	5	9			2	7		
			5					3
2			8		6	9		
	8	5		2	1	4	3	7
7			3		5			9
		1				6		
		6	2	1	7	3		4
4			6	9	8	5		
	2		4		3			

Difficulty: ★ 2/26

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

1	5	3	2	7	6	8	4	9
7	4	9	3	8	5	1	6	2
8	2	6	9	4	1	5	3	7
6	1	4	7	3	2	9	5	8
5	8	2	6	9	4	3	7	1
3	9	7	1	5	8	6	2	4
2	6	8	5	1	7	4	9	3
9	7	1	4	6	3	2	8	5
4	3	5	8	2	9	7	1	6

Difficulty: ★★★★ 2/24

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

AIR FORCE GENERALS Solution: 7 letters

L	A	C	O	M	M	A	N	D	E	R	S	U	N	T
N	I	U	F	L	Y	I	N	G	D	L	E	I	F	I
S	I	E	T	K	N	A	R	E	M	A	R	I	N	E
T	Y	A	U	H	L	O	S	D	T	O	L	I	P	L
N	G	F	T	T	O	N	I	U	R	A	R	M	Y	E
E	E	R	O	P	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	D	D	V
D	T	R	A	F	A	N	I	Y	A	C	J	U	E	A
I	A	E	E	V	L	C	A	T	O	I	T	A	E	R
S	R	D	F	E	I	H	C	N	Y	I	V	N	M	T
E	T	A	V	T	A	T	G	E	T	O	A	A	E	F
R	S	E	E	E	A	R	Y	L	U	L	R	V	L	F
P	L	L	R	E	E	B	A	M	P	C	I	Y	U	A
N	O	I	S	S	I	M	M	O	C	T	S	E	R	T
R	A	A	S	R	E	T	P	O	C	I	L	E	H	S
L	B	T	R	O	P	R	I	A	C	G	U	A	R	D

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Active, Aerial, Airport, Altitude, Army, Authority, Aviation, Base, Captain, Chief, Combat, Commanders, Commission, Congress, Defense, Duty, Field, Flying, Fuel, Gravity, Guard, Helicopter, Land, Leader, Level, Lieutenant, Lift, Major, Marine, Navy, Operation, Order, Pilot, Plane, Presidents, Rank, Rescue, Role, Rule, Staff, Strategy, Travel

Last Friday's Answer: Brothers

To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

NBA-leading Celtics cruise to 8th straight win with victory over Knicks

NEW YORK (AP)—Jaylen Brown scored 30 points, Kristaps Porzingis had 22 and the NBA-leading Boston Celtics easily handled the New York Knicks 116-102 on Saturday night for their eighth consecutive victory.

Brown shot 13-for-24 from the field and had eight rebounds for the Celtics, who improved to 45-12 and sit atop the Eastern Conference with an eight-game lead over Cleveland.

The All-Star forward downplayed the big advantage in the standings with less than two months left before the start of the postseason.

"When it comes down to the playoffs, none of that stuff really matters," Brown said. "I feel like it's going to be about matchups, it's going to be about playing hard. Obviously, home court (advantage) matters. So, that is key. You get into the thick of it, you've got to win basketball games."

Jayson Tatum had 19 points with six assists and six rebounds and Derrick White added 13 for Boston, who have won 10 of their last 11.

Celtics coach Joe Mazzula gushed over the performance of Tatum, who has at least five assists in seven of his last nine games and six rebounds in 16 of 17 games.

"I thought today was a beautiful display of basketball from Jayson," Mazzula said. "It won't go into the most valuable category, but his ability to control the game with his pick-and-roll pace, his pick-and-roll passing, his defense. He put himself on (Jalen) Brunson, welcoming 2-on-1s and creating for others was great. My hats off to him for knowing that's a way for us to win."

AP

Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown (7) drives to the basket against New York Knicks guard Donte DiVincenzo, center left, during the first half of an NBA basketball game in New York, Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024.

Brunson had 34 points on 12-for-25 shooting from the field and 4-for-9 from 3-point range and Josh Hart had 16 for the Knicks, who were swept by Boston in their four-game season series.

Boston opened the second half with a 4-point lead before the All-Star tandem of Brown and Tatum along with Porzingis, a 2015 first-round draft pick of the Knicks, sparked a 30-11 spurt to put the game out of reach.

After Isaiah Hartenstein hit a pair of free throws to cut the deficit for New York to 67-61, Porzingis and Tatum hit back-to-back 3-pointers to make it 73-66. That forced the Knicks to call timeout with 8:21 left in the third quarter.

New York then turned the ball over on the following possession and Brown answered with a 3 before Brunson was fouled on a 3-point attempt and hit all three free throws that made it 76-69.

The Knicks and Celtics traded baskets before Porzingis started a 10-0 run with a 3 from the top of the key and Brown closed it with a layup to extend the lead 88-71 with 3:53 remaining in the quarter.

Hart and Brunson followed with consecutive baskets, but Boston responded with a 9-0 run capped by Tatum's 3 that made it 97-77 with 1:30 left in the quarter and drew loud "Let's Go Celtics!" chants from the visiting fans before boos rained down from the Knicks faithful.

"I prefer any kind of emotion over no emotion," said Porzingis, who was booed by Knicks fans the night he was selected in the NBA Draft and was jeered when his name was called during the lineup introduction.

"If it's cheers or boos, I want them," he said. "Tonight was no different. Big game, (national) TV game, fans were into it and we just took care of business."

The Knicks charged back with a 13-2 run bridging the end of the third quarter and the start of fourth quarter, cutting the deficit 99-90 on Bojan Bogdanovic's jumper with 9:17 to play in the period.

But the Celtics took advantage of three Knicks turnovers and six missed shots to go on a 10-0 run to extend the lead 109-90 with 4:43 left in regulation.

Brown had 10 points in the first quarter to help the Celtics to a 30-36 lead at the end of the opening period. He added 10 more in the second period to pace Boston to a 62-58 advantage at halftime. The Celtics shot 66.7% from the field and 42.9 percent beyond the 3-point line in the first half.

TIMBERWOLVES 101, NETS 86

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Anthony Edwards scored 11 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter and Minnesota beat Brooklyn to regain sole possession of the Western Conference lead.

Karl-Anthony Towns added 28 points to help Minnesota rebound from a loss to Milwaukee on Friday night. The Timberwolves moved a half-game ahead of idle Oklahoma City.

Cam Thomas led Brooklyn with 18 points.

MAGIC 112, PISTONS 109

DETROIT (AP)—Paolo Banchero broke a tie with a three-point play with 0.8 seconds left and finished with 15 points in Orlando's victory over NBA-worst Detroit.

Orlando has won three straight and eight of its last 10.

Cade Cunningham had a tying layup with 12.4 seconds to go and, with a chance to send the game to overtime, he hit the rim on 70-plus-foot shot at the buzzer. Cunningham had 26 points for the Pistons.

Source: Steve Kerr, Golden State agree to $35M, 2-year extension

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr agreed Friday to a two-year contract extension worth $35 million, according to two people with direct knowledge of the negotiations.

The people spoke on condition of anonymity Friday night because Kerr hasn't signed his new contract. ESPN first reported the agreement, attributing that to Kerr's agents at Priority Sports. It would be a record for annual value.

After the Warriors beat Charlotte 97-84, Kerr declined to comment on his deal because "nothing has been signed," but instead just smiled and said he feels "really good" about his future with Golden State.

In his 10th season with the Warriors, Kerr's current deal was set to expire after this season—and he hadn't been in a rush to complete anything, with the season his top priority and him being clear he always planned on returning.

The 58-year-old Kerr recently won his 500th game and has guided Golden State to four championships with a star-studded roster led by Stephen Curry, Draymond Green and Klay Thompson.

"A lot of money, whew," Green said. "I think it's incredible, wouldn't want to finish my time here with any other coach, and what he's meant to this franchise, what he's done for us as players, the winning ways that he brought here, you can't replace that. And so, very happy for Steve and his family, got what he deserved."

Kerr has said numerous times, including last summer with USA Basketball, that he was not concerned about entering this season without a deal for 2024-25 and beyond. He will coach the Americans at the Paris Olympics this summer and has no plans to remain in that role for the next four-year Olympic cycle.

The average value of $17.5 million would be the most for any NBA coach. Other deals have a higher total value: Miami's Erik Spoelstra agreed to an eight-year, $120 million extension earlier this year, while San Antonio's Gregg Popovich (five years, $80 million) and Detroit's Monty Williams (reported six years, $78 million) have bigger contracts in terms of total dollars.

"You're with Pop, it doesn't get much better than that," Green said. "That's exactly the realm of coaching when you look at coaches as a whole, that's the realm that he's in. So, happy to see and it's great knowing that we'll all be in this together."

After coaching the Warriors to the 2015 title for the franchise's first championship in 40 years, Kerr took a leave of absence early in the next season after suffering debilitating complications from a pair of back surgeries. Top assistant Luke Walton coached in his absence and led a record 24-0 start and was 39-4 overall while Kerr was out.

Kerr then missed more than six weeks on the bench in 2017 because of pain, headaches and other symptoms such as vertigo. Now-Kings coach Mike Brown filled in for him until Kerr returned for Game 2 of the NBA Finals as the Warriors went on to win behind Finals MVP Kevin Durant and Curry.

Kerr's extension is worth more annually than what he made in the entirety of his playing career, one in which he was part of five NBA championship teams. It also keeps him leading Golden State through 2025-26, which also represents the last season in which Stephen Curry is under contract with the Warriors.

Among coaches with more than 500 NBA wins, only three—Phil Jackson, K.C. Jones and Red Auerbach—have a higher winning percentage than Kerr, who entered Friday night having won 65.5% of his games with the Warriors. And his postseason success is beyond compare: Kerr has gone 99-41 as Golden State's coach in the postseason, that winning percentage of .707 ranking as the best in NBA history. Only six coaches have more playoff wins than Kerr.

NBA BRIEFS

Bulls forward Patrick Williams to have season-ending foot surgery

CHICAGO (AP)—Chicago Bulls forward Patrick Williams will have season-ending surgery on his left foot, the team said Friday. Williams has been sidelined since Jan. 25 with what was initially diagnosed as acute bone edema. Subsequent imaging revealed a stress reaction. Drafted by Chicago with the No. 4 overall pick out of Florida State in 2020, Williams averaged 10 points and 3.9 rebounds in 43 games this season. He has averaged 9.7 points and 4.2 rebounds in four years. The Bulls were ninth in the Eastern Conference at 26-30 following a loss to NBA-leading Boston on Thursday night.

Pistons' Stewart suspended 3 games without pay for punching, pushing Eubanks hours before game

NEW YORK (AP)—Detroit Pistons forward/center Isaiah Stewart was suspended three games without pay by the NBA on Thursday for punching and pushing Phoenix Suns forward/center Drew Eubanks. Stewart and Eubanks had a confrontation before a game between the Pistons and Suns on Feb. 14. Eubanks said before the game that it happened as he entered the arena. He said an argument ensued and the two were chest-to-chest before Stewart threw the punch and security intervened. ESPN, citing a filing obtained by the network, said a misdemeanor assault charge against Stewart has been dismissed by the Phoenix Municipal Court. It said the motion to dismiss was filed by the prosecutor's office and granted. Stewart began serving the suspension Thursday night in a loss at Indiana. He's averaging 11 points and 6.8 rebounds and has started 34 of 35 games this season.

Register to play in NMC's Upcoming Golf Open

With less than a month away, the Northern Marianas College Foundation is inviting interested golfers to register for its upcoming Golf Open on March 23 and 24, 2024 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort. Online registration is available at www.marianas.edu/golf/.

This year's tournament fee for the 2024 golf open is $250. First place winners in the Men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive $800, second place finishers will receive $500, and third place finishers will receive $300.

This year's tournament will feature thousands of dollars in amazing hole-in-one prizes, such as a brand new 2024 Lexus RX350 from Atkins Kroll Saipan, a brand new 2023 Honda Civic Type R from Joeten Motors, $10,000 shopping spree at Top Shelf Wine and Spirits, $10,000 from Ambyth Shipping and Seafix Inc., and $5,000 from Pacifica Insurance.

NMC's Golf Open aims to raise funds to build a beautiful, modern, innovative campus that will be the envy of the Pacific. The new campus will house state of the art classrooms, offices, and labs that support learning, research, and workforce development. The NMC Foundation is seeking the CNMI private sector's support through fundraising events like the golf tournament.

NMC

A golfer tees off at NMC Foundation's Golf Open in 2023 at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

Interested companies and individuals who would like to help the college with its rebuilding efforts can donate educational tax credit, cash, or in-kind contributions by visiting www.marianas.edu/golf or by contacting Helen Camacho at helen.camacho@marianas.edu, Raynard Travilla at raynard.travilla@marianas.edu, or Miguel Dandan at miguel.dandan@marianas.edu/.

For more updates, follow Northern Marianas College on Facebook and Instagram (nmc.proa) or visit www.marianas.edu/. ***(PR)***

PONY

From page 20

they're pretty fast. There's not much hills," while Tang said, "the weather was great for running."

Miller, for her part, said that her target time was less than 22 minutes and felt happy with her time. "I was in the lead the whole time and the beginning was too fast for me, but I kept the same pace. It was windy so it was a little bit hard."

As for the event, she said, "It's very good. I love the shirt and I enjoyed the race."

TurnKey Solutions' Billy Grow said after the race that the sponsorship was spontaneous but was glad Rotaract reached out. "We wanted to sponsor the event… I'm just glad that everybody is having a good time."

"We're a sponsor cash-wise, Rotaract is doing everything. "Richard [Baleares] is doing an awesome job and Ed [Dela Cruz] from Run Saipan. Ed and his team were clutch for this whole thing as well," said Grow.

Rotaract Club of Saipan president Richard Baleares said the turnout was great and the event successful, with over 100 runners that participated.

"If it wasn't for TurnKey Solutions, Run Saipan, and other Rotaractors, I don't think it would've been as successful as it is," said Baleares. He added that he won't be the president for a fourth term as he wants another member to step up and see what they can contribute and offer to the club.

"This whole event is my swan song. It's very special to me because in a way it's like my farewell as president," he said. "It's just a great way to gather the community together—build goodwill and better friendships just like the Rotary four-way test, and just take care of our cardiovascular health and promote healthy living.

Rotaract Club of Saipan was chartered in 2014, then rechartered in 2021. According to Rotary International's website, Rotaract "brings together people ages 18 and older to exchange ideas with leaders in the community, develop leadership and professional skills, and have fun through service."

Rotaract Club of Saipan 10 Years of Service 5K Fun Run Presented by TurnKey Solutions sponsors were bronze sponsors D&Q Saipan, Latte Built, Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, Coral Ocean Golf Resort, Yaong Corporation, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Gold's Gym Saipan, D & W Corporation dba Highway Express, McDonald's of Saipan, Spicy Thai Saipan, and MEGAbyte of Saipan.

Silver sponsors were Kentucky Fried Chicken/Taco Bell/ Marianas Fast Food Inc, Docomo Pacific, Micronesian Brokers Inc., and Northern Marianas College.

The gold sponsors were Marianas Variety, Paradise Dental Spa, IT&E, Bridge Capital, and JVR Media.

LEIGH GASES

Akiko Miller runs into first place in the women's division of the Rotaract Club of Saipan 10 Years of Service 5K Fun Run last Saturday morning at the Garapan Fishing Base.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Over 100 participants of the Rotaract Club of Saipan 10 Years of Service 5K Fun Run pose for a photo last Saturday morning at the Garapan Fishing Base.

ISAIAH

From page 20

them this wouldn't be possible," said Aleksenko.

The year 2023 for him was "good," he said. "A lot of memories were made and I just hope I can improve and do better. My favorite part was definitely the gold medal win in the Solomons."

As for Chavez, a junior at Saipan International School, she was the NMSA Female Student Athlete of the Month for May.

She ruled the 400m, 800m, and 1,500m races in the girls U18 division of the PSS McDonald's All Schools Championship and was named MVP of the competition held in May. Chavez also competed for the NMI in the Oceania Cup in June and broke the NMI's 24-year record in the 800m after timing in at 2:29.24.

As a multi-sport athlete, not only did Chavez excel in athletics, she also excelled in soccer. She played for the NMI in the AFC U20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Palestine, AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers in Thailand, Marianas Cup on Saipan, and EAFF Women's Preliminary Competition in China. She scored in each of four competitions—the only player on the national team to do so. Chavez was also named NMSA Female Student Athlete of the Month for October for earning All Island Top Honors in the 5K race in the Asia Pacific Cross Country Championships held in Guam.

Sixteen-year-old Chavez said after the banquet that she felt "happy and blessed" when emcee Nick Gross announced her name.

"With all my teammates cheering me on, it was a surreal feeling. This award represents the hard work I've put in, the early mornings, late nights, training in the middle of the day, and all the sweats and tears," she said.

She said her favorite achievement of 2023 was beating the 800m record "because I've wanted to surpass it, and having a record under my name is not easily earned."

She dedicated the award to her teammates, coaches, family, friends, and God. "For young athletes, keep working hard. There will be days when training doesn't go your way, but always remember that no one is perfect, and you're only human," said Chavez.

The banquet was attended by Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), Northern Marianas Sports Association president Jerry Tan and board members, representatives of CNMI's sports national federations, athletes, the awards banquet nominees, 2023 Pacific Games sponsors representatives, and athletes' family members.

Results of the 2023 CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductees; Coach of the Year; Administrator of the Year; and Team of the Year will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

DOLPHINS

From page 20

no opening. The Dolphins' defense also matched their offense as while the Geckos had almost no chances at the basket, the Dolphins easily added fuel to their fire.

The first half came and went and only 5 points swished for the Geckos. They went through the wringer as turnovers and steals made it difficult for them to carry out their plays before it became Dolphins' possession again.

The Dolphins showed no mercy in the second half as most of their bench and starting five contributed to their winning cause. Khristian David led the team with his 14 points, while Marl Balingasay shot 11, and Kenny Laquian made 7.

It was almost half through the second half when finally SIS found themselves on the board again. SIS' Omari Joab and team tried their best to get at least halfway to the Dolphins lead, but was left in the dust quickly with a 41-point deficit. Joab scored the most points for his team toward the end of the game with 6, while Kyle Kramer had 4, and Aiden Camacho had 3.

In other results that night, Mount Carmel School defeated Grace Christian Academy, 46-28, and Saipan Southern High School escaped Agape Christian School, 46-44.

In last Wednesday's games, SSHS JV edged Kagman High School JV, 28-18, and MHS Yellow is still undefeated after they beat MCS JV, 31-23.

Only Kagman High School is undefeated also with five wins—with MHS facing off against them in the last regular season game this Friday, March 1.

SSHS is right behind them with a 5-1 record; MCS is at an even 3-3; Rota's Dr. Rita H. Inos High School Bucks has a 2-2 record; ACS is at 1-4; Tinian High School is 1-2; and SIS and GCA have yet to win with five losses.

MHS 61 – David 14, Balignasay 11, Laquian 7, Ye 6, Tengco 6, Alano 6, Jiang 6, Suba 4, Catubo 1.

SIS 20 – O. Joab 6, Kramer 4, A. Camacho 3, Chambers 3, Newman 2, D. Camacho 2.

Scoring by halves: 29-5, 61-20.

2024
TJ BUBBLE COLOR
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SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2024
AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK - MICRO BEACH PAVILION
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GRAND PRIZE DRAWING
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UNITED ROUND TRIP TICKET TO MICRONESIA, MANILA, PALAU AND JAPAN.
PROCEEDS BENEFIT COMMONWEALTH CANCER ASSOCIATION (CCA) AND MAKE A WISH FOUNDATION
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(BEFORE MARCH 15)
RACE DAY REGISTRATION
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MARCH 11-15, 2024
10:00AM TO 6:30PM
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TINIAN WESTERN LODGE

NBA-leading Celtics cruise to 8th straight win with victory over Knicks.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Register to play in NMC's Upcoming Golf Open.

PAGE 18

Isaiah, Kaithlyn are Student-Athletes of the Year

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Student-athletes Isaiah Aleksenko and Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez set the bar high for young athletes as they excelled in their individual sports disciplines in 2023—culminating in the 2023 Male Student-Athlete award for Aleksenko and the 2023 Female Student-Athlete of the Year award for Chavez.

The two were recogned for their achievements at the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

ATHLETES of the YEAR

Marianas High School senior Aleksenko is a swimmer, who, despite not having a regular sized pool to train in, swam to multiple podium finishes and broken records.

The 17-year-old was the NMSA Male Student Athlete of the Month for November. He was Team NMI's flag bearer in the opening ceremony for the 2023 Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands.

In the swimming competition of the Pacific Games, he won a gold medal in the 200m butterfly event and bronze in the 100m butterfly, 4x200m freestyle relay, and 4x100m individual medley relay. In July, he also represented the NMI to the FINA World Championships in Fukuoka, Japan where he set both age group (17 to 18) and national records in the 50m backstroke (26.94 seconds), 100m backstroke (58.58 seconds), and 100m butterfly (54.46 seconds).

Aleksenko said after the banquet that he was not expecting it all. There were a lot of good nominees, he said, so it was really unexpected when he won. "I feel great. I feel honored for winning this award," he said.

He thanked his coach Hiroki Kimura, his coach's wife Yuko, his mom, and his teammates for helping him win the award, "without

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LEIGH GASES

Student-athlete Isaiah Aleksenko, left, is the 2023 NMSA Male Student-Athlete of the Year and Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez is the 2023 NMSA Female Student-Athlete of the Year. They pose with their awards during the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

NMSA

Group photo of the 2023 NMSA Student-athlete of the Year nominees during the 2023 NMSA Sports Award Banquet last Wednesday night at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

Dolphins still unbeaten in boys hoops

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Marianas High School Dolphins are still playing high-level basketball after they notched their fifth straight win in as many games in the 2023-2024 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Dolphins took their fifth win against the Saipan International School Geckos in a blowout 61-20 game.

The Geckos stood no chance against the Dolphins' aggressive defense and well-executed strategy as the lead just grew wider and wider with each second that passed.

Before they could even think of going for a shot at the basket, the Geckos' shot clock reached zero multiple times—with the Dolphins' man-to-man defense leaving

See DOLPHINS on Page 18

LEIGH GASES

Marianas High School's Marc Tengco goes for a jumper as he's defended by Saipan International School players during their game in the 2023-2024 IT&E Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Pony, Rex tie for 1st, Akiko tops Rotaract 5K

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

In what seems to be the first time, there's a tie in the men's division of a foot race—with friends Pony Tang and Rex Pixley running together into first place in the Rotaract Club of Saipan 10 Years of Service 5K Fun Run last Saturday morning at the Garapan Fishing Base.

Tang and Pixley finished at a time of 18:39.22 each, while Akiko Miller topped the women's division by just under 19 minutes at 18:59.33.

LEIGH GASES

Rex Pixley, left, and Pony Tang run into first place together in the Rotaract Club of Saipan 10 Years of Service 5K Fun Run last Saturday morning at the Garapan Fishing Base.

Second to Tang and Pixley is Kosuke Sato who clocked in at 18:59.91, and third place was Jordan Ruiz with a time time 19:57.17

Rosemarie Chisato claimed second place after Miller with a time of 24:25.30, and third was Krizelle Tuazon at 25:31.52.

Tang and Pixley, both seniors at Marianas High School, said they just wanted to finish in a deadlock. Throughout the race, they took turns with the lead and decided at the last minute to reach the finish line together as they've "been teammates for a while now and it's just a fun run," they said.

Pixley said of the race, "I like the pathway runs because

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